THREE LECTURES
ON THE
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

ROBERT RAINY, D.D.

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THREE LECTURES

ON THE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE DEAN OF WESTMINSTER'S RECENT COURSE ON THAT SUBJECT,

DELIVERED IN THE MUSIC HALL, ON THE 24TH, 26TH, AND 31ST JANUARY, 1872,

BY

ROBERT RAINY, D.D.

THIRD EDITION.

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NOTE.

The Course of Lectures delivered by the Dean of Westminster, and referred to in those which follow, closed on Friday, the 12th of January. Those now published were resolved upon on Tuesday, the 16th, and were delivered on the earliest days thereafter on which the Music Hall could be procured for the purpose—viz., on the 24th, 26th, and 31st of January. Readers will understand that no great elaboration is to be looked for in such circumstances. The Lectures are now published as they were delivered; except that passages omitted in delivery from want of time, are restored to their places, effect is given to one or two corrections in matters of fact, forwarded to me by the courtesy of gentlemen on whom I had commented, and one or two notes are added which have occurred to me in passing the sheets through the press.

R. R.

Edinburgh, *3rd February*, 1872.

CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

Introductory.

	PAGE
Object of Lectures,	3
Strategical Operation,	4
Does Dean Stanley understand us?	6
Relations of our Presbyterianism to Episcopacy,	8
Experiment of 1572,	8
Experiment of James I. and Charles I.,	10
Black and Blue,	12
Effects of Episcopacy in Scottish Church,	12
Motives of the Presbyterians,	13
Tendencies which accompany Prelacy,	15
Small "Points" of Scottish Presbyterian Sects,	17
Russian Dissenters,	17
Burghers and Anti-Burghers,	18
Recruiting Efforts,	20
Scottish Interest in Church Questions,	21
Contrast,	21
Bishop Jolly and Mr. Cowper,	22

LECTURE II.

Independence of the Church.

Scottish Antagonisms,	24
What is the Church?	25
Church or no Church?	26
Church Liberty and Church Government,	27
The Unintelligible Question,	29
Dean's View,	30
New Lights on History,	31
"Political Circumstances,"	32
Littleness of the Question,	33
Edinburgh in 1637. Young Man in Corner,	34
Was the Cause Worthy?	37
The Covenant,	37
Questionable uses of it,	38
Martyrdoms and Absurdities,	40
Conscience, Individual and Social,	42
Worth of the Idea,	43

PAGE

Influence on Scottish Convictions, ... 46
Parliament, ... 46
Hildebrandism, ... 47
Laudianism, ... 50
Disruption of 1843. Dean's View, ... 51
Establishments, ... 53

LECTURE III.

Views of Christianity dominant in Scottish Church Life.

Two Conditions—the First, ... 55
The Second, ... 58
Illustration, Dr. Chalmers, ... 61
The Dean and the Moderates, ... 64
Cui bono? 65
Precursors, Robert Douglas, ... 66
Leighton, ... 67
Carstairs, ... 68
The Dean's Case, ... 69
Moderate Tolerance, ... 70
Moderate Zeal; the Highlands, ... 71
Moderate Zeal; Whitefield, ... 73
The Secession, ... 74
True History of Moderatism, ... 75
Culture before Truth and Life, ... 81
Dean's Sympathy with Moderatism, ... 83
Robert Burns, ... 85
Advocacy of Established Churches, ... 87
Answer for the Non-Established, ... 89
Conclusion, ... 90
Appendix A, ... 93
Appendix B, ... 96

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

FIRST LECTURE.

When a clergyman of the Church of England comes among us to deliver to us his impressions of our Churches and of our Christianity, we owe him first of all a courteous reception. We are to presume that he came among us on a benevolent design to do us good, and we are to treat him accordingly. In that, I hope, we have not failed. And we thank him for all that was friendly, either in his criticism or in his praise. Next, however, we owe him, and we owe it to ourselves, to sift the statements which he makes and the conclusions which he implies. In the present case this duty is the more incumbent, because Dean Stanley has given us, not a version of our history only, but a version with a moral. No one, I suppose, is so blind as not to see that it is the moral rather than the story which interests the Dean. He did not come among us merely to reform our notions about our past history. He came to influence, if possible, the history of the years that are before us. Every one of these lectures, like Æsop's Fables, looks towards a practical application. The Dean, one may complain, does not state his moral quite so plainly as Æsop did. But we shall have no great difficulty in gathering what it is as we proceed.

The element of the lectures now referred to is that which

gives them a claim to attention, and this alone has induced me to ask you to hear me to-night on the other side. I should count it an idle thing to ask you to take so much trouble merely for the purpose of showing that an Englishman has fallen into some mistakes about our antiquities or about our controversies. So ordinary and natural a circumstance could discompose no one. Still less have I come here to try to defend through thick and thin the Scots in general or my own ecclesiastical progenitors in particular. They were men, and therefore fallible and failing; they were Scotsmen, and therefore when they went wrong they did it energetically, blowing a trumpet before them, and defying all the world to refute them. Yes, and being Scotsmen they had like ourselves the moral and intellectual physiognomy which the world, favoured with many a wandering specimen, knows so well; an ungainly people, shall I say, wearing our principles in a serious pedantic way, angular, lumbering, roundabout in our motions, argumentative, inflexible. Why, the very birds of the air, passing us on easy wing, could they see our inner man as they see our outer, would judge us, from the point of view of *their* consciousness, much as the Dean does. Defence here is useless; let us not attempt it. The Dean, coming among us, discerns this family likeness in us all. He only discerns in us all what we have all discerned in one another. To enjoy a joke and a laugh at one another is a privilege that has been claimed and exercised by religious parties in Scotland ever since the days of John Knox. Long may it be ere so wholesome a practice shall be proscribed. We have been able to combine it with reverence, with earnestness, with a strength of conviction and of purpose not easily shaken either by laughter or tears.

It is no untried "strategical operation" which the Dean has employed, in making our history the means of raising doubts in our mind about our principles and our prejudices. Every

reader of his works knows this method well. I remember a passage somewhere in which he dwelt with delight on the idea, that theological principles, carefully built up and fenced by argument, often simply vanish into air when they are brought into contact with great and good men, whose greatness and goodness is not of the regulation pattern of the theologians. Such men, he said—Socrates, for instance, Spinoza, William Penn—simply walk through the fences the theologians have set up. And the method has an opposite application. The representative of a principle makes himself and it ridiculous on the Dean's page, and so principle and representative are turned about their business together. Just so we have seen, of late, a long procession of Scotsmen, headed by Lord Pitsligo, and Bishop Jolly, and closing with Robert Burns and Walter Scott, marched up and down through our Scottish principles and practices, upsetting all our fences, obliterating all our demarcations, driving us from our fixed points, tearing off our theological garments, until we are left nearly as naked as we were born. It cannot be wondered at, surely, if we drop some natural tears at finding ourselves so maltreated by kindly Scots of our own flesh and blood. Yet we need not wonder, perhaps, that these well-tried tactics should have been applied by the Dean to the case of Scotland and to the minds of Scotsmen. The Scottish vote has once or twice come heavily into the scale in decisive moments of the history of these islands. Two hundred and thirty years ago, when the liberties of England were in question, the Scottish vote determined the issue. Two years ago, when the maintenance of the Irish Establishment—always questionable on other grounds—had begun to threaten us with the endowment of Romanism (and no man advocated the maintenance of the one and the adoption of the other more ably than Dean Stanley), it was the Scottish vote that, right or wrong, determined its overthrow. There are other questions rising on which the Scottish vote may again tell heavily. If the Dean thought he

could either win us, or bewilder us, he surely had a perfect right to try; and he has shown no lack of courage in the effort he has made.

But if profitable lessons are to be drawn from our history, our mentor must first understand it and us. For I hope it is not Scottish arrogance to assume that with all our faults we have done enough in the world to have a claim to be understood. Perhaps Dr. Stanley does thoroughly understand us. But if so, I shall take leave to say that it is his first great success in this department. Through all his works —works written always so charmingly—works that bear token of an eye which nothing picturesque escapes, either in the physical or the moral world—this is precisely what one misses—a sympathetic appreciation of the deeper and the stronger currents of religious life and of doctrinal controversy. In Dr. Stanley's pages movements dependent on these have their outside wonderfully depicted, but their inner meaning scantily realised. And the reason is plain. Dr. Stanley's mind turns ever to the limitations, the compensations, the counterpoises which balance and qualify all assertions, which take away the sharpness of the definition, which temper and assuage the confidence with which it is propounded. That habit of the understanding may or may not be desirable in itself; but let this be remembered, that Church history has been mainly made, certainly in all its worthier passages, by men of intense convictions; and hardly without the experience of intense conviction shall it be understood or represented.

I am anxious to be done with these preliminaries. But I must yet further say that in any estimate the standard by which we are to be measured, and the point of view from which it is applied, is the main point. One way of applying a standard was not, I think, intended by the Dean. But it might, I fear, be impressed on the audience, and how to deal with it I don't know. In many a smiling allusion and many a quip-courteous, as events and

characters pass in review, I seem to hear a gracious gentleman saying—I am an Episcopalian; surely you could not have any objection, or let us say, any strong objection, to Episcopacy. And I am an Erastian; now, is it not absurd of you to pretend to me that there is any great harm in State supremacy? And I am a Moderate; why in the world should you cherish any objection to the Moderates? And I am a Broad Churchman; I don't believe in or don't care for many doctrines you believe in or care for; surely you won't pretend to justify yourselves in making any great fuss about these points? To all this what can a man answer,—at least a well-bred man; especially when one has been reminded that we owe all our civilisation to England?

Now I leave introductory observations. And I pass the sketch which Dr. Stanley has given us of the early Christianity of Scotland. Those fragments of our buried past, which he pieced so gracefully together, he treated with a cordiality of appreciation which we in turn appreciate. I will not be tempted to say one word of the changes introduced by Margaret and her sons. Nor will I meddle much with the history of the Scottish Episcopal Communion in its separate state. One point must be touched upon, perhaps, before I end. But for the present it is enough to say that while I have the very worst opinion of the system of Scottish Episcopacy as it existed in the days of its supremacy, I admit most willingly that all along men memorably good were found among its adherents; and adversity brings out the best points of all Churches. I do not know a pleasanter experience than when, in travelling through the strifes of ecclesiastical parties, one stumbles on a clear instance of unequivocal religious and holy life associated with that very thing which one is for the present called to fight with. In so far as the Dean held up truly devout and good men in any of the Scottish Churches to the admiration of the

rest, he was performing a good office for all of us, and we are all grateful to him.

But I must be allowed to say a few words about the relations of our Scottish Presbyterianism to the Prelacy which was introduced among us, and pressed upon us at different periods. And to-night, so far as I touch on Prelacy, I shall confine myself within strict limits. Practically, and as a matter of fact, Prelacy and the royal supremacy were mixed up together. That ought never to be forgotten; each supported the other, and each made the other worse. But I reserve to next night whatever concerns the liberty of the Church; and on next Wednesday I intend to speak of the Moderate party, and of the views of the gospel and of Christian religion which ought to be applied to our Scottish history. To-night, after saying what I think requisite regarding the topic of Episcopacy, as I have just now limited it, I will take up some other matters which must be touched on, and which do not fall naturally under either of the other heads. To-night's topics, therefore, are of subordinate importance intrinsically, and a little miscellaneous as well, defects for which I apologise beforehand.

On the topic of Episcopacy, as now limited, I should wish to be as short as possible. Dean Stanley appeared to imply that our Scottish history, rightly read, proved us mistaken in supposing that there was any difficulty in combining the two systems in the most friendly relations. Difficulties, as it would appear, were manufactured or imagined; that was all. To illustrate this we were directed to 1572, the last year of John Knox's life. Episcopacy was introduced then, and John Knox made no stir against it.

Now in that year the Church, along with the State, was entering into a very curious experiment. The object was to get some arrangement effected in virtue of which the patrimony of the Kirk. or some of it, might be applied to

religious uses. The distribution of it in moderate incomes to the various labourers throughout the country was desired by the Church, but resisted by the State. The great benefices must be kept up—ostensibly on legal and constitutional grounds, really in order that there might be good fat geese for the nobles to pluck. A compromise was effected, and part of this compromise was that nominal bishops, abbots, and priors should be appointed. As to the bishops, they were to have the name of bishops in Church and State both. But in the State and in law they were to have the legal character and incidents of bishops; while it could be maintained plausibly that in the Church they were *not* to have the ecclesiastical character of bishops, for they were to have the powers only of superintendents, according to the well-known order then established, and were to be subject in that character to the General Assembly. It was an experiment, whether the Church could not effect an adjustment regarding the property by consenting to names and titles, without introducing thereby any serious change into her pre-existing constitution. It was not a safe experiment, for a variety of reasons, and the Church very soon came to see that, and withdrew from it again in a very few years, rather unceremoniously. But that was the nature of the experiment. John Knox did not like it. He gave it no countenance. He was in his "decrepit age," as he pathetically calls it, and within a twelvemonth of his death. His brethren thought the experiment might be tried. And he did not publicly oppose it. But that which he did not oppose was the giving of the name and legal incidents of a bishop to a man who in the most important respects was not to be a bishop. For those bishops were not clothed with personal jurisdiction over their brethren as members of a superior order, and they had not committed to them the administration of any ordinance to which their brethren were not competent.

But at a later period, we are told, the two systems flourished together—that is, in the latter days of James I., and in those of Charles I. Episcopacy was set up again by the Crown. Bishops, presbyteries, curates, and kirk-sessions were all welded into one system, and need never have quarrelled if men had been wise. The inference drawn from this statement for our Scottish Episcopal neighbours does not concern me. But the inference implied as to the subsequent unreasonableness of Scottish Presbyterians is plain enough. Why did they divorce what was so happily joined? Now, this is an essential misrepresentation. And it draws all its plausibility from circumstances very easily explained.

With all possible goodwill to the work, it was not possible of a sudden to banish Presbyterianism and introduce Anglican Episcopacy. The thing could not be done; and therefore a large though a diminishing amount of Presbyterianism was spared for the time. The policy was to make head step by step, to keep up a steady pressure in the hope of ultimately tempering the Church to the intended result. With this view, during the reigns of James and Charles every device was exhausted to outwit, deceive, and concuss the Presbyterians, yet in such a way as to avoid any general collision. Leading and resolute men were banished. Pliable tools were placed in great positions. Promises were made and broken. Innovations were introduced with the assurance that nothing more was intended, while yet those innovations were made the stepping-stones to new changes. Nonconformity was treated with that judicious sort of repression which discouraged it without driving it mad. The names and forms of Church Courts were allowed to remain, while yet power was steadily though gradually concentrated in the hands of the bishops. It was a very well managed scheme, and it had a kind of success. Men were gradually brought to accommodate themselves to each successive stage of the process. At last, however, an attempt to ac-

celerate it led to the explosion of 1637 and 1638, which swept away the incubus as if it had been a mere nightmare. That warning was remembered; and even when Episcopacy was revived in the darker days of Charles II., those who managed for the Crown determined to mingle some method with their zeal. And the method now, as before, was to leave some Presbyterianism, both in government and worship, in those inferior strata of the system which touched most nearly the common life and experience of the people generally, until the sterner Presbyterianism could be worn out of the country, and things made ready for a safe move in advance. That was what the Dean describes by saying that "the two systems flourished in the closest contact." There is a great deal in a phrase. So Popery and Protestantism flourished in Oxford when James VI. forced Popish Fellows into Protestant colleges. So, also, we may say that Germany and France flourished in the closest contact, after the siege of Paris ended last year. France could not fight; yet her national life was not gone, her institutions were not annihilated. Better off than the Presbyterians, she even had her Assembly. Germany, meanwhile, drawing her inspiration from quite other sources, sat upon France, exchanged polite proposals with M. Thiers, and dictated conditions as seemed to her good. The two systems "flourished in the closest contact."

I was a little amazed, I confess, at the Dean's statement that the Assemblies of Andrew Melville sat side by side with the hierarchy of Charles I., remembering, as I did, that the want of Assemblies was a notorious and outstanding grievance of that reign. But I perceive that the Dean must have intended to convey that the hierarchy were haunted by the ghost of the murdered Assembly, which I believe to be quite true. The Assembly came to life indeed in 1638, which was in the reign of Charles I. But I do not think the hierarchy would have described the action of the Glasgow Assembly by the polite euphemism of saying that it "sat by their side."

Nay, so shadowy was the distinction, as we may gather, that actually Prelacy was called "black," because the prelatic ministers wore black gowns; whereas we are to take it that those of the other side wore blue cloaks and broad bonnets. Let the Dean be assured that no Presbyterian minister ever troubled his head whether the cloak he preached in was black or blue. Disputes about the colour of vestments in which the gospel is to be preached do not belong to our parish. We have never been civilised enough to understand them. And we had other reasons, tolerably strong, for calling Prelacy black.

In the resistance which our fathers made to Episcopacy, and also to various institutions and ceremonies which usually go with it, they sometimes exaggerated the intrinsic importance of the point in debate. That happens in all debates, and it is peculiarly apt to happen when men are maintaining their sincerity under oppression, and are like to be ruined for so doing. But not to speak at present of the royal supremacy, which I have reserved, I wish to call up to your minds what Scotsmen looked back upon in 1638. What may be made of Episcopacy in Churches that heartily approve of it I do not inquire. But what Episcopacy proved to be, as forced on a community that in various degrees disliked it, doubted or denied its authority, and feared its tendency, was this—it meant the worst kind of humiliation; it meant the expulsion and silencing of venerated men; it meant the promotion of forward and fawning and lax men to positions in the Church of which they were unworthy; it meant an unhappy, dubious, perplexed state of mind on the part of many worthy and able men, anxious to make no needless disturbances, yet doubtful, and more than doubtful, whether they were not betraying a noble and scriptural constitution; it meant persistent deception, and manœuvring, and falsehood on the part of leading Churchmen; it meant a state of things in which every influence that is ecclesiastically demoralising was in full play, in which temptation to

fawn and cringe was a great ecclesiastical force. Men looked back on it all the more indignant because they felt personally ashamed and humiliated. And their resolution was that they would be finally done with it. Henceforth, by God's help, they were resolved that no institution should be accepted or sanctioned unless it could be made good to the Church's conscience out of God's Word, and set up on that ground, cordially, heartily, and resolvedly. If they said strong things about Episcopacy, and the Dean can produce many such sayings if he pleases, they only, in the language of their own proverb, "roosed the ford as they found it." It had been a very bad ford for them.

Nor let it be said that the recoil connected with those temporary circumstances betrayed men so far into a narrow and petty position, unfit to be permanently maintained. It is always to be maintained. All that might tempt us to look askance on Christians who are persuaded in favour of Episcopacy has long passed away. We have the best reasons for honouring and loving many of them; and some of them are among the foremost in upholding those very views of Protestant truth and of evangelical religion which we count to be unspeakably more important than any form of government. All that might tempt us to look askance on such men is past. But all remains that should dispose us to enduring and enthusiastic thankfulness that our fathers upheld Presbyterianism and shut Prelacy out.

For the earnestness with which Presbyterianism was maintained was due to something else besides the confidence men had in their theoretical conclusions about Church government. Everything that is theoretically good and true has its practical witness in itself, from which it receives daily confirmation. So it was with Presbyterianism. Presbyterianism meant organised life, regulated distribution of forces, graduated recognition of gifts, freedom to discuss, authority to

control, agency to administer. Presbyterianism meant a system by which the convictions and conscience of the Church could constantly be applied by appropriate organs to her affairs. Presbyterianism meant a system by which quickening influence anywhere experienced in the Church could be turned into effective force and transmitted to fortify the whole society. Presbyterianism meant a system in which every one, first of all the common man, had his recognised place, his defined position, his ascertained and guarded privileges, his responsibilities inculcated and enforced, felt himself a part of the great unity, with a right to care for its welfare, and to guard its integrity. From the broad base of the believing people the sap rose through Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, to the Assembly, and thence descending diffused knowledge, influence, organic unity through the whole system. Yes, Prebyterianism is a system for a free people that love a regulated, a self-regulating freedom; a people independent, yet patient, considerate, trusting much to the processes of discussion and consultation, and more to the promised aid of a much-forgiving and a watchful Lord. It is a system for strong Churches—Churches that are not afraid to let their matters see the light of day—to let their weakest parts and their worst defects be canvassed before all men that they may be mended. It is a system for believing Churches, that are not ashamed or afraid to cherish a high ideal, and to speak of lofty aims, and to work for long and far results, amid all the discouragements arising from sin and folly in their own ranks and around them. It is a system for catholic Christians, who wish not merely to cherish private idiosyncrasies, but to feel themselves identified with the common cause, while they cleave directly to Him whose cause it is. Our fathers felt instinctively that the changes thrust upon them threatened to suppress great elements of good—not mere forms alone, but the life which those forms nourished and expressed. When Episcopacy shall have trained

the common people to care, as those of Scotland have cared, for the public interest of Christ's Church, and to connect that care with their own religious life as a part and a fruit of it, then it may afford to smile at the zealous self-defence of Scottish Presbyterianism.

But, besides all that, there was, and there is, another reason for the strength of the objection to prelatic Episcopacy cherished by Scottish Presbyterians. In itself the difference might be regarded as implying merely a diverse judgment from ours as to the number and relation of office-bearers by whom the Church is to be governed—surely a very small affair, the existence of which need not hinder the warmest recognition and co-operation. But Episcopacy is fated, I fear, to bring other things in its train. From the circumstances of its long history; from the fact of its being established, where it is established, rather on grounds of tradition than of Scripture; from its being associated with festivals, and ceremonies, and like inventions, methods of Church life which rest on the same traditionary ground; from its being the link on which hangs suspended a whole system of salvation by Church and sacraments, which depends on Episcopal succession; it follows that wherever Episcopacy comes, the rest presses in behind. Episcopacy led up to Popery, though many a bishop fretted and fought against that result. So, though many a sincere and honest Episcopalian Protestant detests the system I am speaking of, he can never get rid of it. It comes, and it comes not merely as an element or fact, but as a singularly arrogant and imperious force, demanding for itself and its principles a complete ascendancy, and forcing on the Churches where it exists the alternative of submission or of perpetual strife about the very first principles of Protestant truth. It was the perception of this, growing clear to the Scottish mind, that lent more than half its intensity to the revolt of 1638. And the same reason holds still. To keep those superstitions clean out of our Churches,

to disembarrass ourselves of a world of foolish, mischievous, and misleading practice and sentiment, by the very simple process of holding fast to Presbyterianism, is to gain a greater good by adhering to a lesser good. We value them both; and we know that in the day we resign the one we shall lose the other. We have no temptation to resign Presbyterianism in our day; but most devoutly do we thank and praise God Almighty, who gave grace to our fathers to maintain it amid the temptations of theirs. And I repeat that in 1637, when our Church resolved that it would be tampered with by Episcopacy no more, not the system itself only, but the train of accompaniments and tendencies that cleave to it, determined their resolution.

Now, when we take our stand against Episcopacy, and against the multitude of things that go with it, in worship and otherwise, it seems to be thought that we betray a small, scrupulous spirit. Why object to this one and this other beneficial and useful invention, graceful, poetic, fragrant with the associations of 1500 years? Our answer is, that if we once began we should have plenty of small scruples, such as agitate our friends across the Border. And the only remedy is either to swallow all that any one plausibly proposes, or else to sweep all these things away in a mass, on the ground that whenever we begin to introduce man's inventions into God's worship and service we deviate from the true path. Of these alternatives we adopt the second. There is nothing petty or small about it. Like every other principle, it may be taken up and applied in a small, anxious, casuistical spirit. In itself it is large, broad, and manly. We have nothing to say to that immense apparatus of human inventions, we refuse to have anything to do with them, we simply dismiss them all; and thereby we are rid of a thousand small questions and petty disputes.

Here I had intended to speak of the nature and influence of the covenanting movement: but I will reserve it to next lecture.

But, before I close this lecture, I wish to advert to one of the things which struck the Dean about us, and that is the smallness of the points on which the Scottish Dissenting sects divided. I think he might have told us in the first place, but perhaps he did not know it, that beyond all question the moving influence which led the first Seceders to take up a marked position was no small point, but it was anxiety with respect to the chief matters of the way of salvation by Jesus Christ; neither did they secede even on that ground, but were deposed by the enlightened and liberal Moderates. It was after being deposed they made up their minds that from the position thus providentially assigned them they had no cause to return, all things considered. And as this influence had much to do with their beginning, so it continued to be the secret of their multiplying and the source of their influence, at the very least, as much as any peculiarity whatever. However, what strikes the Dean about all the Presbyterian sects is, first, that we are all conservative, which is true, resting on the old constitution, and protesting against corruptions; and, secondly, that we divide on small points. So that he can think of nothing like us but the Russian sects. Now, here the Dean did not openly declare all that was in his heart; but I am glad to be able to supply that lack. For, long ago, as it happened, the Dean described the Russian sectaries, coupling the description with an admonition to Free Churchmen and Established Churchmen alike to lay the facts to heart. As he still, after long years, dwells on the parallel with a more precise application, I feel it a privilege to hold the mirror up. Hear, therefore, Seceders, and Cameronians still more, what you are like. Here are some of the grounds of the Eastern nonconformity. It is a sin in the Established clergy that they give the benediction with three fingers instead of two. It is a sin to pronounce the name of Jesus with two syllables instead of three, or to repeat the hallelujah thrice instead of once.

All processions ought to go from left to right, according to the sun, not from right to left. It was a most alarming innovation to use the service books, or the revision of the Authorised Version, in which mistakes arising from time and ignorance have been corrected. It is or was a mark of heresy to eat the new unheard-of food, the potato, for that accursed apple of the earth is the very apple with which the Devil tempted Eve. And you can imagine the delight with which the Dean wrote down this closing instance:—"It is a departure from every sound principle of Church and State to smoke tobacco." The ancient czars and patriarchs had forbidden it. "Peter the Great, for that very reason, and for commercial reasons also, tried to force the abhorred article on the now reluctant nation, and asked whether the smoking of tobacco was more wicked than the drinking of brandy. 'Yes,' was the answer, reaching perhaps the highest point of misquotation that the annals of theological perverseness presents, 'for it is said, not that which goeth into a man, but that which cometh out of a man, that defileth the man.'"

Not presuming to add anything to this instructive picture of our friends, I remark that it is perfectly true that Scottish religious bodies were, for a time, in the way of dividing on small points; it is quite true, and really if I had any means of throwing doubt upon it, I could not have the heart to do it. Who would deny or abridge the peculiarities of that phase of Scottish character and incident to which the Dean pointed? Who would forego the touches of Scottish life that cluster round those "testimonies?"

I knew of a couple who lived many years ago in the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire. They were eminently worthy people, and deeply attached to one another. The man was a typical Scottish patriarch—his name is not unknown to Scottish literature—his mind overflowed with a sweet reflective piety, as elevated as it was sincere. Of this couple the one was a Burgher, and the other an Anti-Burgher. Cherish-

ing the deepest confidence in one another, they had never dreamt of drawing one another into any unfaithful compromises by "occasional hearing" that might confuse the clearness of their respective "testimonies." Every Sabbath-day they set off, the wife riding behind her husband; and after depositing her at her own place of worship, he proceeded to his, calling for her on his return. So the years passed. At length the reunion of the denominations was accomplished over the grave of the buried Burgher oath. Both husband and wife were agreed in seeing no difficulty in principle, and they acquiesced readily in the ecclesiastical proceedings. But the difficulty followed. The union of the bodies took away the reason, and indeed the seemliness, of the two going to diverse churches. To go to church together followed, of course; and it was an utterly discomfiting and bewildering experience. Many a time they had mingled fervent prayers together; but to get down at the same door, to sit in the same seat, to look on at the same Bible, and to go home together, after having heard the same sermon—it was like beginning a new education in their old age. Their very love had realised itself as extending across the dividing line; and now when the dividing line was taken out of the way, they did not know what to make of it. Neither of them disguised the feeling that they would have gone to the grave in which they were to lie side by side with more content by the old road than by the new one. That union was one of the last providential trials which came to chasten two Christian lives full of love and of good works.

Well, of those divisions it is enough to say that the parties concerned can well afford not to be very careful either to excuse or account for them, can well afford to join in the laugh over any Scottish idiosyncrasies that appeared in them. They stand as a warning of dangers to which our Scottish Churches are exposed. I think the line of things along which they came admits of explanation in a way that is instructive, but I cannot trespass on your

time. I may say this, that the Seceders, when they resolved to keep their separate position, and to state a separate cause, very naturally fell back on the old lines of the Covenants from which battle had been delivered so often. But they took them up not merely in their general spirit, but with a renewal of the old modes of applying them, so as to pledge their members precisely to those documents and to the testimonies which embodied their present application. Hence came a sort of mutual responsibility among them for the view taken by each member of new events as they emerged, which was sure to run them into difficulties on the point of personal uprightness. In those difficulties they were entangled for a time; and so came that succession of splits crosswise, which has furnished such a fund of hard Scottish names to lecturers disposed to moralise on Scottish divisions. Those who care to do so may make of them what they can.

But was it not due to those bodies to remark, that instead of giving themselves up to the dividing tendencies, they still clung to the catholic conception of the Church—they still realised the duty which the Church owes not merely to truth, but to love, and to the just liberties of their members; and that under these influences they did what Churches have not very often done,—they worked themselves out of the complications from which the dividing influence sprang? Was it not worth noticing that a reuniting movement, thoroughly Scottish in its whole principles and working, set in and prevailed? Look across the Border, and see whether anything like this earnest application of mind and heart to realise a worthy Church life exists there. You have there in the Establishment a loose system of Churches, held together by the external bond, which notoriously would fly in pieces if that bond were removed; and you have a system of Nonconformist Churches, which, with distinguished excellences, yet escapes all difficulty on this subject by declining to carry Church life, organised upon definite principles and responsi-

bilities, beyond the limits of the individual congregation. There was nothing to hinder our Dissenters splitting up indefinitely, had they been so disposed. Their history has taken a very different turn.

Now, though I have been touching mainly minor points, I think it has partly appeared that he who will draw lessons from our history ought to appreciate and investigate one question. What is the meaning and source of that grave enthusiasm about the Church as a divine institution which has so remarkably appeared among our Scottish people? It is an enthusiasm connected not with a hierarchical or sacerdotal, but with a Christian popular view of the Church. Has Dean Stanley appreciated it? Not at all, but only noted points in which the working of it appeared to him, looking from his point of view, odd or unaccountable. To try to get a little nearer to the heart of this business must occupy us in the remaining lectures.

But in its intensest and most exclusive forms, this enthusiasm of ours always maintained a wide catholicity of view with respect to the visible Catholic Church of Christ. This may be best illustrated by a contrast.

What would have been said if in any of these Dissenting Churches it had been held forth by leading ministers that the salvation of the soul turns on the belief of a point of Church government? In point of fact, although they were occasionally run into difficulties and divisions, they all held wide and catholic principles respecting the fellowship of salvation, and unchurched no Christian body on the mere ground of not holding with them. But if they had held forth any such doctrine as I have indicated, how would Dean Stanley most justly have pointed his moral and adorned his tale! But some one says, Why put such a case? The thing is out of the question—salvation depend on a point of Church government! I beg such an one's pardon. There are those among us who

hold so. There are those who hold that a man who errs on a point of Church government escapes the loss of his soul only if he can present the plea of invincible ignorance. We all hold, I suppose, that deliberate, conscious defiance of God's will, known to be His will, is rebellion, and is incompatible with His favour, whether the point be great or small. But this is quite a different matter. There are those who hold that there is a point of Church government so momentous that error about it excludes from the fellowship of salvation, and leaves a man to God's uncovenanted mercies; only, if his ignorance be invincible ignorance (not by his own fault), it may be hoped that those unrevealed mercies will overtake his case. Bishop Jolly, the same whom Dean Stanley described, wrote thus:—"Every Christian is bound to maintain communion with his proper bishop, and to join with none but such as are in communion with him, . . . that being the only way to be in communion with Jesus Christ, the Invisible Bishop and Head of the catholic Church. . . . As the one bishop is the principle of unity to a particular Church, by our union with whom we are united to the one Invisible Bishop, Jesus Christ, so schism in any diocese consists in a causeless separation from the communion of the one Bishop, whereby the schismatics are separated from the communion of the Invisible Bishop, and so from the whole catholic Church in heaven or earth." And afterwards, dwelling on the greatness of the sin, and protesting against those who hold these views being thought uncharitable, he says:—"At the same time, they make great allowance, as they trust our compassionate Saviour does also, for the case of those whose *invincible ignorance or prejudice* will not let them see the truths of these principles." In like manner, in a work by Rev. John Comper, of Aberdeen, published in 1854,* the author dwells on the necessity, or at least the assured safety, of attending the ministrations of those who have Christ's commission

* See Appendix, A.

derived to them through a regular successive transmission from the apostles; and after describing at large the inefficacy of ministrations not in the line of apostolical succession, he proceeds:—"I anticipate the inquiry, Do you therefore deny salvation to all who are not happy enough to live under an apostolically derived and regularly ordained ministry? . . . I can safely reply we do *not* assert that salvation cannot be had by any out of the apostles' fellowship. There is such a thing as *involuntary, invincible ignorance*. . . . He who knows well how far error is the result of the force of early instructions, associations, and other circumstances which unconsciously to ourselves give a bias to the mind, and how far it is the fruit of wilful prejudice, intellectual pride, or indocility of heart, will award to each according to his deserts; saving, as we trust and do not doubt, in His own inscrutable ways, those whose errors are their misfortune and not their fault, being *involuntary and invincible;* and as surely—for His Word has affirmed it—consigning the wilful deniers of His one truth to the fate of those who make or believe a lie, which, in the awful words of Holy Scripture, is 'to be damned.' Of individuals, indeed, we judge no man. To his own Master each standeth or falleth." That is, he will not judge who is or is not invincibly ignorant. Other materials I have from quarters nearer home, but I forbear to use them.

Do I say that all this is uncharitable? Not at all. I make no doubt Bishop Jolly would have gladly rendered any charitable office to the soul or body of any of us. I impute no want of charity. But I say, What a gigantic superstition, and, be it remembered, one by no means peculiarly Scottish—a superstition certainly involving far stranger views of God and of Christ, and of the administration of salvation in the world, than can be charged on the Church principles of the Cameronians or the Seceders, or even the Free Church itself.

SECOND LECTURE.

THE vision of the Scottish Church that floats before the eye of the Dean of Westminster is a vision of the Church militant. To him it appears militant, not only in the sense of withstanding and enduring what an evil world might lay upon it, but in the sense of standing ready, with a peculiar appetite for combat, to call to a reckoning any one who may cross its path. Here he finds his main clue, as regards the question of the Church's independence. Looking at that principle merely as a principle, he finds it very difficult to account for. It grew partly, he says, out of convergent circumstances and a democratic spirit. But he is not very happy in selecting his "circumstances." Much is to be ascribed, he thinks, to the influences that arose when the covenanted Church and the covenanted State fell asunder and quarrelled. Unfortunately, the doctrine was most clearly, carefully, and elaborately defined, just at the very time when they had not quarrelled, but were in the strictest friendship. The doctrine of the Church's independence could not be very ripe, he thinks, in the early covenanting days, for in those days the Church taught a quite different doctrine, viz., that the State had a great deal to do with religion. But what will he say when he learns that these outrageous Scots taught both doctrines, and even developed them side by side in no fewer than a hundred and eleven propositions? After all, however, the passion for national independence and the passion for antagonism he finds to be the main sources of it. So that, if I may translate the Dean into the language of our worthy

fathers themselves, the liberty of the Church was a plant that grew wholly on the stock of old Adam. This is all we can make of it. And a sad mistake our history must have been, for the most part, if this be so. For his own part, the Dean's theory is very simple. The best state of the Church is to be regulated by the wisdom of Parliament. The old interpretation of a figure in the Revelations was that the Church, crowned with twelve stars, signifying the apostolic doctrine, has the moon, the region and representative of mutation, under her feet. But the Dean crowns her with the moon, and what becomes of the twelve stars we shall see perhaps in next lecture.

For the present we speak of the Church.

In the presence of this great gulf between the Dean and us, will the audience forgive me if I halt a little, and try to get footing and survey the position before we proceed? Since the difficulties are so great, we must look well about us. Is the Church of Christ a distinct society? Indeed, is it a society? Was it meant to be such? Was it constituted as such? Was it furnished with means and institutions, whereby it could exist and be—could have a mind, express a mind, and apply its mind as a society? Is it distinct, as such, from other societies, say the State? When we are aiming at complying with God's revealed will about the Church, are we to aim at what I have now expressed? are we to take that to be our duty and set it before us, as part of our ideal and our goal?

It has been a prevailing conviction among Christian people that the Church of Christ was to be a society, having its own basis, its own peculiar life, its own constitution and means of action, and supplying some uses and ends not unimportant to the world. If so, there is no escaping the question what sort of society it should be, and on what principles it should be regulated. That is a question which will exercise the world—not the Church itself only, but the world too—in the coming years.

Well, but if we mean that, let us understand what we mean.

According to some people, according to Dean Stanley, for instance, we must take it that the Church is not so much a society, but rather a dispersion. It is the discrete aggregate of Christians, or rather of people touched more or less by Christian sentiments and influences, existing in the world, or in any particular country. It may indeed have formed itself into various organised forms of Churches, hierarchies, and the like, to good effects and to bad, at various times. And these organisations, or some of them, have been in a sense necessary and proper. But still the best state of the Church is that it should dissolve itself as an element or flavour in the general community, and that the representation of it, as well as the regulation of it, should devolve upon the organ of the general community, *i. e.*, the State. This is the goal. All other arrangements are therefore provisional and inferior.

One ground on which this scheme tries to rest itself, in a confused way, is the general impression conveyed by this question, After all, are not the Christians the great thing—the Christians with their Christian belief and their Christian practice? If you have got the Christians influencing the community, and influencing one another, as they cannot but do, is not that the great thing? What more do you need or should you care for? Well, I reply, being a Protestant, Yes, that is the great thing. In those Christians, those believers, whom spiritual bonds link to Christ and to one another, stands that great eternal Church invisible, which, frail and fleeting as it may seem, is steadfast as the being of the Son of God. Whatever Churches may be, or may not be, let believers be the salt of the earth. But then most Christians believe that, in virtue of their obedience to Christ, one of their first duties is to join outwardly in society with other Christians for some appointed ends, whereby they become visible as a society; and the operations of this society, in point of fact, were meant to bear most directly on the continual maintenance and reproduction of that invisible Church. Now, if it still be

said, Ah, well, but the Christians—the Christians are the great thing—then I say this: If you choose—if you think it scriptural and right—do without the Church visible altogether. Dismiss it and be done with it. Only in that case don't meddle farther with it, and don't pretend to speak about it. There are Christians, earnest people, whose views amount practically to a renunciation of all visible Churches. That is a conceivable plan; if it is ever generally carried out, it does not need much of a prophetic gift to see what will come of it. Take that plan if you will; have nothing but the individual Christianity, and such benevolent associations as may rise up out of it. But if you are to have the Church, why, then you must have regard to what the Church was meant to be.

Now, the question about the Church which comes before us to-night is more general and more important than any question of Church government merely in itself is. It is a question for all Churches, on the assumption that they believe themselves to be organised and governed in a lawful way. But questions of Church government do get mixed up with that which alone concerns us to-night in this manner—Churches may be organised in such a fashion that they could not possibly get on, if they were set to do Church work, without help and without control. Hence the members of those Churches are biassed in favour of vague and confused views, and they try to bias others. The answer to any representations coming from this quarter is to say, Go and get organised better, and then we will speak to you. For instance, the Church of England, for the purpose of forming and expressing its own life through its own organs, is clearly the worst organised Church in the world, with the exception perhaps of some of the Lutheran Churches. It would be a mockery of common sense to trust the uncontrolled government of that great Church to a score of bishops, or to such a body as Convocation now is. But then while German writers modestly confess that the Lutheran Church organisation

is the weakest and least defensible part of their whole system, members of the Church of England come down here full of the impressions derived from their own system, or no system, and would have us to copy them. They know so surely that to get the Church absorbed in the State and governed by the State is far the best way; no other system will do half so well; indeed, no other system will do at all. The short answer—but, of course, it would have to be very politely expressed—but the substantial answer is—Go home again and get your own Church organised. If Episcopacy be the right way of it, keep it, and organise your Church with bishops; but put it in working order; if you can't trust the clergy, take in the laity; if Episcopacy alone won't do, eke it out with Presbyterianism; and if that won't do either, go on to Congregationalism, and help it out with that. Do this, and make a beginning even in this nineteenth century. But if you won't, then don't come to us, who have been working our Churches these 300 years, to tell us, like the fox in the fable, that your own defects are a providential blessing which have qualified you to be the model for all mankind.

Now, not in our bewildered country only, but even elsewhere, a suspicion has visited the minds of Christians, that this society, the Church, ought to be free—more particularly that it ought not to be subjected, and ought not to subject itself, to the authoritative control of the State in the discharge of those functions which are allotted to it by Christ. To speak of Scotland only, one of Knox's companions wrote these words to the Regent :—"There is a spiritual jurisdiction and power which God hath given unto his Kirk and to those who bear office therein; and there is a temporal power given of God to kings and civil magistrates. Both the powers are of God, and most agreeing to the fortifying of one another, if they be right used. But when the corruption of man entereth in, confounding the offices, . . . then confusion followeth in all estates." Knox himself embodied

his views of the subject rather in practice than in theory. Under his guidance the Church acted with the freest consciousness of her own competency, while at the same time she showed the utmost anxiety to get the State to act along with her. At that time no one could foresee the questions that might arise regarding the Church's freedom, and the form in which they might arise. Very soon, however, they began to come into view, and from that day to this Scotland has been familiar with them. The incidents have altered, and the changes in men's views of toleration, as well as on other matters, have somewhat varied the pressure of particular difficulties and of particular arguments. But in all essential respects, in those respects in which it ought to occupy thinking men, it is the same question as when the opposition to the Church's liberties was carried on under the banner of the royal supremacy.

But now, before we go further, we have a great difficulty to face. How I can decently ask such an audience to join me in attempting it, is a hard question. I am to make plain what this liberty of the Church can possibly mean. Yet to Dean Stanley it is either utterly unintelligible—and in that case how can it be made plain either to me or to you?—or it is Hildebrandism, that is to say, rank Popery—in which case, if I dare to utter it, surely I shall as well deserve a "cutty stool" as if I had even sung mass in your "lug." In this strait I shall, at all events, try to be short. We say that the Church of Christ, as a society, acting through its own organs and guides, is entitled and bound to have a conscience about the doing of those things which are the peculiar work of Churches. This conscience is to be regulated by a regard to God's revealed will, and not to accept authority imposing obligation to obey from any other quarter; and the Church is entitled and bound in all the things specified always to give effect to this conscientious judgment.

Those things which the Church is thus freely to do, subject to the bidding of no master on earth, are those things which Christ set it up to do. As to all other matters, the Church and the members of it are simply to obey lawful rulers. But Christ delivered to His Church truth to be confessed and taught, and also work to be done in the forming, maintaining, and loosing of various relations, and in seeing to the performance of various services. These, as we fanatical Scottish men say, are the sphere in which the Church must not bind herself to take authoritative direction from any quarter but one.

Now this may be true or false, absurd or sane; but to say that it is difficult to understand is what, in a Scotsman, we should call affectation. In the Dean one does not know what to call it. Perhaps civilisation. As to calling it Hildebrandism, we shall say a little about that by and by.

Yet the Dean finds it so difficult to imagine the principle I have stated taking root in any body of men as a genuine principle, that he is forced, as we have seen, to account for the whole long struggle as merely one form of our national jealousy of foreign domination. It is the same temper, he thinks, the same principle, the same cause. The Scotsman would not have his national way of it altered. When a question in dispute concerned his Church, he cast about for a theological pretext, and persuaded himself to believe it. But that was merely putting on an ecclesiastical uniform for ecclesiastical battle—changing the kilt, as it were, for the celebrated blue cloak. Really, it was the old secular national self-assertion applying itself to the new battle. *Nolumus mores Scotiæ mutari.* And so certain is this, that on the strength of it he appeals pathetically to the Seceders. You have been persuaded, he says, to become voluntaries, to cut loose from Church and State connection. That, on your part, is so great a mistake that it is a kind of *felo de se.* The Seceders, I may say, have often been told that, but now they must hear it on a quite

new ground. The very bottom, the Dean argues, of your assertion of independence, if you trace it to the bottom, is not Church, but State, not ecclesiastical, but patriotic; it is simply the old Scottish privilege, which is not of grace, but of nature, the privilege, namely, of being always in the right. Hear that, Andrew Melville and George Gillespie, Ebenezer Erskine and Adam Gib!

Who will despair of progress or deny new light? Here are Andrew Melville, who came from Geneva, formed in the school which Calvin had left to the presidency of Beza, and that circle of genial and able men who went with Melville into banishment. Here are Henderson, and Gillespie, and Dickson; and Rutherford, as interminable in distinctions as he is rich in poetry and feeling; and Durham, whose favourite field is not Church questions, but who touches them often, and always with a master's hand, and many more, contemporary and subsequent, whom I do not name. They thought they had a principle in their minds. Really they did. They were confirmed in that opinion by finding that they agreed with one another about it. They also thought, or were under an impression, that they loved that principle as scriptural. In their own apprehension also they felt bound to contend for it—they thought that was what they contended for. Great numbers of their countrymen also were under the imagination that an agreement with these men had come to pass within them. Some wrote books and some read them, and some even answered them; some went to banishment, some went to battle, some went to the hills and were shot, or captured and hanged, or starved, thinking in their own minds they had a belief, which they could not deny as long as they had it. On the strength of the idea that they were contending for this principle, men have differed about them ever since; some have blessed them for it, and some have banned them. Down comes the Dean of Westminster, and he tells us, Pooh! principle! not a bit of

it; of course the honest men thought a principle was at the bottom of their minds, and of their battle; quite a mistake; fought just because they were Scotsmen; had to fight; couldn't help it; gallant fellows, though; and then he takes a survey of us from Andrew Melville's days down to the Disruption; and as he marks each successive trial of strength and endurance he choruses, Magnificent! what independence! what sturdiness! what courage! magnificent!

Yes, I reply, very magnificent; but if this be the true view, oh, what fools! what utter, arrant fools! what unchristian fools, that cursed the history of their country with the miseries, the divisions, the arrested development, the interrupted Christian activities, not for a principle, not even for a false principle, but for a mere doggedness which only fell into the mistake of supposing that it served a principle! What an array of fighting fools, from Andrew Melville down to the greater name of Thomas Chalmers! And how great a man the Dean of Westminster, who has seen through them all!

And what is the ground of it? How had the patriotism of Scotland occasion to betray men into so wonderful a mistake? When the question began, it began on Scottish soil, between Scottish men. James wished arrangements made which the Church disapproved; the Church stood upon her right; James stood on his supremacy. What he proposed, and what he professed would content him, was the revival of the arrangements entered into in the year 1572. Those had been Scottish arrangements; the sanction of Knox himself could be plausibly claimed for them; there was nothing to arouse mere Scottish jealousy. And unless men had believed that there was a principle on which they ought to stand, we have no reason to believe that any mere desire to thwart the King and to have their own way would have been allowed to create the difficulties and the sufferings that followed.

It is nothing to the point to say that political circumstances

existed in Scotland that tended to suggest the idea of a claim for the liberty of the Church. It is a mistake to confound the essential principles of a cause with the circumstances which may have favoured its development. Political circumstances favoured the Scottish Reformation. Much more did political circumstances not merely favour, but in a manner determine, the course of the Reformation in England; and yet neither in Scotland nor in England was the Reformation essentially a political movement or a political passion.

As little does it affect the merits of the case to say that feelings of patriotism reinforced the energies of the Church's struggle. Very likely they did; and when Dean Stanley speaks of the temper formed in the wars of independence reappearing in the Church conflicts, I have nothing to object. I suppose that for the maintenance of any kind of independence, secular or sacred, some natural staunchness is a help. God can make the weakest strong; yet that which Burns calls a "stalk of carle hemp in a man" is a gift not to be despised. If the Scots had any of it, they needed it all.

In this as in other connections the Dean is fond of pointing out what he deems the littleness of the questions that sometimes arose. I grant it to be very clear that, in defending the liberty of the Church, if the cause itself be great, the points which become the occasion of raising it must sometimes be little. That depends on the assailants. They are generally skilful enough to try to make their onset on a point that seems small, knowing that so they can make the defenders seem more punctilious and unreasonable. Besides that, however, it is quite true—let us conceal nothing that is true—men may be small as well as points. You cannot avert the presence of human infirmity. If you discuss questions, you cannot always avert casuistry; if you call men to have a conscience and to exercise it, you cannot always avert scrupulosity; if you call men to take up responsibilities, you cannot always avert fussi-

ness and exaggeration; if you call men to claim privileges and power, you cannot always avert arrogance, impatience, injustice. What share of these faults our fathers showed I am not careful to determine. They had their share doubtless. But here I will leave generals, and take one of the Dean's instances, that I may try in that instance whether the cause in which Scotland contended should be deemed small or great.

Those who heard or have read the Dean's lectures will remember his description of the crisis in Edinburgh in 1637—the poor Bishop and Dean, with their innocent service-book; the insane fury of the women; the foregone conclusion that Popery, apostacy, and all manner of evils were impending; the outburst of epithets; and the final explosion, that proved critical for so many interests. To so fine a point are things brought, that a young man in a corner saying Amen proves in the last analysis to be the veritable *corpus delicti*. That was what provoked the women and brought on the catastrophe. Who could have thought it? A young man said Amen, in a corner, and forthwith Scotland rose up and revolutionised three kingdoms. What a people! May not Scotland stand still with horror, even at the distance of two hundred and thirty years, and moan with Macbeth—

> "I could not say Amen
> When they did say God bless us."

And if the Dean should kindly say, with Lady Macbeth—

> "Consider it not so deeply,"

must we not still reply—

> "But wherefore could I not pronounce Amen?
> I had most need of blessing: and Amen
> Stuck in my throat!"

How impressively does the Dean end his account by reminding us that the "main offence which provoked these terrible manifestations might now be repeated, one might almost say with impunity, in every Church of Scotland, Established, Free, or Seceding!"

Well, now, I will not make much of the fact, believed then, and believed still, that these innovations were but steps in a progress; and that the progress was to be, under Laud's inspiration, either to Popery or to a point so near Popery that it would not be difficult, after it was reached, to complete the baneful transformation. That was what made people's minds so electrical about the mass. But I will not dwell on it. Look at the obvious facts. I mentioned in my last lecture what the experience of the Scottish Church had been for a generation before the date in question. What happened now? Under the authority of the Crown there came forth, first of all, a Book of Canons, and then a Prayer-book; and I shall not dispute about the character of the Prayer-book. Look only at what is indisputable. The Book of Canons might seem at first to bear hard on the ministry only. It involved and required an explicit acknowledgment of the royal supremacy. By what it contained, and by what it omitted, it could be shown to provide for sweeping away the remaining framework of a Presbyterian Church, and it laid the Church completely at the feet of the bishops. But more than that, it denounced excommunication on all who should deny the king's supremacy, on all who should say that the Liturgy contained anything contrary to Scripture, on all who should deny the authority of Church government by archbishops and bishops. Hereby the people, as well as ministers, were exposed to the severest oppression at the hands of the bishops' courts. A man must not have a mind nor speak his mind about the worship of God without incurring excommunication. And excommunication in those days was no light matter. I have not really had time to look up the point, but I believe it inferred confiscation of goods for all who did not within a certain time make their peace with the Church. And then, which is the main matter, there was the Prayer-book. It was imposed without the least pretence of examination or sanction by any organised body or court

representing the mind of the Scottish Church; no discussions in Assembly, or Synod, or Presbytery; nothing of the informal process by which in our Churches the real mind is formed and gathered on important questions—the conferences of thoughtful and serious men with their elders and with the minister, the explanations asked and given, the doubts offered or cleared away. Here was the right claimed and used to revolutionise on the largest scale the worship of God in which the people continually joined. It was done in defiance of their known wishes, and under the inspiration of a theological tendency which the whole people abhorred.

It was when things were in this state, the whole country getting into ferment, deputations coming to Edinburgh to supplicate and remonstrate, all ranks organising and combining —it was then that the use of this Liturgy was begun in the High Church—taking place for the first time in public service, and claiming the acquiescence of those who worshipped there. The outburst was merely the accidental and yet inevitable explosion, among passionate people, of a feeling which possessed the gravest and wisest men. It was no more dignified than any explosion is apt to be. Nobody need applaud it; but nobody need moralise over it. As to the young man in the corner, I don't know what he was saying Amen to. I make no doubt he meant nothing but good; but if he was thought to be saying Amen to the imposition of the Canons and the Liturgy, I don't wonder that any one who was near him should lay hands on his throat.

All honour to the firmness of the people who said that this should not be done, who resolutely stopped it; and all honour to the discernment of the people who saw that the principle here embodied was false and dangerous in all its applications, and resolved that henceforth the Church should not be called upon to sanction or submit to institutions not in her own judgment warranted by God's Word.

I ask if this uprising of the Scottish people is worthily spoken of by the Dean, not in reference to its manliness—he admires that—but as to the worthiness of the cause that was put to issue?

When those who adhered to the Commons of England rose in arms, what was the quarrel? Various causes mingled; but no doubt with many of them the decisive point was this, that taxes should not be raised in England without the consent of Parliament. All other powers and prerogatives hinged on that one. Would it be thought well in a historian to say of those who died in that quarrel, that they threw away their lives for a matter of half-a-crown, perhaps, or five shillings?—for the question, whichever way decided, was never like to concern them to more than that amount. Do we not honour the men who stood for a principle that concerned the destinies of England, all the more because their personal stake was small? Did not these men do well to judge that if the sum was small, the principle might be great? But I say fearlessly, which was the nobler cause, or if you will, which was the nobler nation—the nation that fired at the thought of taxes raised by power without the consent of Parliament; or the nation that fired at the thought of worship thrust in by force without the consent of the Church?

It was this feeling which expressed itself in that great movement, the signing of the Covenant. There was the deepest conviction in men's minds that the course of things which had been submitted to in the past was fraught with intolerable mischief. The Crown forcing on and the Church dubiously and unwillingly submitting to arrangements which the Church judged unscriptural and unedifying—this was a state of things in itself wrong and demoralising, leading to a moral paralysis of the Church's best energies, and sure to multiply inward division and distrust. Moreover, it was becoming plain that no one could tell to what

results the process might be forced on. Men knew very well that in making a stand the risks might be great, and that the odds must be heavy. But having for a moment the opportunity to breathe free air, and to utter common convictions and resolves, it was a grand impulse which led them to join together and to pledge themselves to one another in a common recognition of this, as duty to God, that the system they had known should end, and that what they agreed in regarding as destitute of Scripture warrant should henceforth, as far as their power extended, be shut out, and kept out. In time past they had finessed and paltered, and had halted between two opinions. They had felt the effect of that. Now henceforth they would keep a clean conscience, and walk straight upon principle, agreed upon by all. Lower motives mingled with the higher, no doubt. For all that, it was a grand impulse. In the thrill that went through Scotland the bulk of the nation felt itself one, as it perhaps never did before or since. We have the testimony of an enemy to the "great joy" with which, through burgh and land, the Covenant was signed by all kinds of people. Surely it is a striking thing that what so united the nation was a resolution that God's authority, discerned by themselves in His Word, that and nothing else, should set up institutions in their Church. That principle was written then on the fibre of the Scottish people in a manner that is legible enough yet. May it never be obliterated.

So far most Scottish Presbyterians will be agreed. Beyond this I daresay a great variety of opinions will emerge. For myself, I think it only candid to express my belief that the use made of the Solemn League and Covenant, when it was made, in theory at least, a test of membership in Church and State, was to a certain extent * unwarrantable and proved to be a mistake.

* I say to a certain extent; because I admit the right of States, and Churches too, on particular occasions, when they are placed on their defence, to subject their officials to tests which it might not be warrantable permanently to maintain.

The temptation, however, was of the very strongest kind; strongest for the strongest and most resolute minds in that difficult time. To resist the influence of the Crown in Scotland, taken by itself, might prove in the long run hard enough. But if England backed the Crown, if the Crown gained and held England in the name of the supremacy and Prelacy, what would the result be? 1660, and the years that followed, showed what it might be. Now Scotland was still thrilling with the surprise of its awakening, its unity, its sudden resoluteness, both about the basis and the end of action. But did not England itself, all that was best in England, seem, in that memorable Parliament, to be verging towards the same temper and contemplating the same results? Might not England's action and Scotland's be brought into the same line? Might not England thrill with an impulse as thorough and mastering as Scotland's had been? Might not the nations be bound to each other to achieve delivery? For so great an end ought not Scotland to offer to pledge every atom of manhood and resource that was in her, that, joined with the better part of England, with one great effort she might win the victory? The place given to the Solemn League and Covenant very much represented this dead-lift effort to get Prelacy and, as it was believed, Popery, dislodged from influence in the three kingdoms by a great heave. It was a "most powerful mean," so it was described, for "purging and preserving" the Protestant religion. Therefore, the State was to go through with it, and pledge every man to the cause. And the Church could hardly be behind the State in a case of that kind.

But the effect was that the nation proved to have pledged itself to a work beyond its strength, for England proved not at all to be of the temper which covenanting implied. And since the requisite consent in England could not be maintained, the task was really as much beyond Scotland's rights as it was beyond her strength. Yet Scotland was sworn

to persevere with the enterprise. Then even for Scotland itself difficulties were sure to arise—difficulties for the State, from imposing so peculiar a test of citizenship; and difficulties for the Church in carrying through the theory that all her members were so pledged, and must carry out their pledge consistently. These difficulties appeared in a very edifying form when Charles II. came over from Breda, and appeared among the Scots as their own covenanted king. No wit of man, not even of the Scot, could resolve such a problem as that. Immediate entanglements followed, which got worse and worse, till Scotland was utterly paralysed and bewildered. And yet that policy, mistaken as I think the event proved it, had a strange mixture of effects. In so far as it embodied in the most striking form the feeling that the line of action indicated in the Covenants was the true, and safe, and upright line for Presbyterians, the line for a man to pledge himself to with all he had, it helped to inspire that tenacious, long-enduring, indomitable resolution which won the day at last. No wonder that in those after days of confusion and division—days so trying that it must have been a bitter thing merely to live in them—men looked back wistfully to the time when, whatever the apprehensions and the dangers, the bulk of the nation moved with one impulse, and vowed to labour and to suffer together. But in so far as it seemed to pledge Church and State by oath to a definite Scottish or British constitution, irrevocable and unalterable, it entangled men unwarrantably, and led to misunderstandings that never could be cleared up.

And so there is no difficulty in producing from the martyr time, along with the basis of clear conviction on which the sufferers stood, evidences enough of the painful intricacies through which some of them strove to hammer out the scheme, at once complete and consistent, of their own duty, and their Church's, and their nation's. Now, I honour first of all the clear, broad truth on which those sufferers stood, and which mainly sustained their

courage, which deserved and won the sacrifices they made; but as I read their quaint, earnest reasonings about the whole detail of a position of things so entangled, bewildering, and depressing, I confess that my eyes grow dim with tears—tears of admiring sympathy for those who held on through all, striving their best to clear an honest path through endless perplexities and temptations—firm upon this point, as one of the noblest of them phrased it, that they had "sufficient points to suffer for." "Honour," says the Dean, "honour to those Scottish Churchmen for their devotion of themselves, not only to death, but even at times to absurdity;" and no one can doubt that, in his view, the absurdity is a very considerable element in the whole performance. Well, now, I will take leave to ask a question. I am not going, I think, to say anything unfair. I hate the system of insinuating a calumny which one dare not openly express. The Dean has as full right to receive credit at our hands for perfect sincerity and integrity as any of us at the hand of another. And therefore I say beforehand, that whatever sacrifice the Dean's conscience might require of him in the maintenance of candour and honour, I am not to doubt he would make it freely, God's grace helping him, which is needed by us all. But what I cannot but ask is this—What is that thing, what is that doctrinal truth, in behalf of which the Dean's conscience, according to his present lights, would lead him to think that people ought to undergo martyrdom, and might do so without absurdity? Where would he draw the line and make a stand? I declare most seriously I don't know. I have not the least idea. I don't see how any one can draw an inference or hazard a guess upon the subject. The Dean appears to me to be wonderfully able to hold both sides on most theological questions. Judging from the intense ardour of his demonstrations during the last three years, I have a kind of impression, but I am not sure, that in his judgment in behalf of Erastianism a

man might lay down his life joyfully at the scaffold or the stake. If not for that, then I am at an utter loss.

Ah, but martyrdom in a good cause is the life-blood of the Church and of the world. It is that which stems the current of an unbelieving epicureanism and of a scoffing scepticism, and rings into the hearts of men the conviction that the faith cannot die, cannot be killed, cannot be conquered, lives on in the strength of an unseen Lord, and has its coming victory sure. It is not the less impressive—all the more, I think—because the men who suffer and overcome have plainly enough their human infirmities and defects. Smooth insinuations about absurdity are not going to cheat us of the memories of our Scottish martyrs.

The Dean, making another effort to find out the meaning of this mysterious Scottish principle, says that it was intended, no doubt, to represent, though in a very distorted manner, the indefeasible superiority of moral over material force, of conscience over power, of might against right. This is only about half of what it represents. It represents also this, viz., the conviction that Christian people, joining together in an instituted society called the Church, are called and bound, and may expect to be helped and enabled, all of them, and each one in his own place, members, elders, pastors, and so forth, to act out the Lord's will as a society. I repeat, as a society; that at all events they must try to do it; and their doing of it must be guided by truth and animated by faith all through. Therefore, they must hold themselves free to do that thing, out of conscience and faith—free, not as individuals only, but as a society.

Here it is that the Dean and we diverge, and here is the point that is utterly impenetrable to his understanding. It seems to him that all reasonable exigencies are satisfied if it is granted that an individual man is not to do or say what is against his own conscience. He grants if any such thing is required, he must refuse; if it is made the condition of any society in which he is,

he can leave it and keep his conscience clear, unless, indeed, on second thoughts he comes to think that he had better not make so much fuss about it. To conceive it to be a point of conscience that the society, the Church, should as such be responsible, be free; that it should, on common principles, and in the use of institutions agreed upon as authentic, ripen its mind, express its mind, give effect to its mind about its own affairs—this is to the Dean impossible. I am not here to argue about it. But if I have not already wearied the audience, I would like at this place to say a few words about the moral significance and effect of this idea—what it is worth, in short.

The life and being of Christianity, which is first of all in Jesus Christ our risen Saviour, is doubtless to be found next in the actual faith and love of individual men and women, saved by grace, learning Christ's will, and doing it. That is the main, most essential thing; no Scottish peasant, whose heart beat true to his Church's teaching, ever placed the Church first. The first thing is to be in Christ; and the next thing is to be like Him in all manner of conversation.

But then it was our Lord's intention and is part of His revealed will to have in the world a society, having its own peculiar life, and doing its own peculiar work. It was to be constituted, not by force or necessity, but by the influence which Christ's call should prove to have in the minds of men. It was to express itself in its distinctness as a form of force and influence in the world, in addition to the influence of individual Christians. For this purpose an appointed sphere was given to it, of truth to be confessed and taught by the society, and of work to be done; not superseding the confession nor the work of the individual Christian as such, but resting on that, drawing strength from that, lending order and method to that, reinforcing that in turn. In this sphere the society was to act consciously, unitedly, learning its lessons and finding its way to its work, operating with the force and weight of a society, amid

the currents of the world's affairs, striving to keep itself true to its own ideal, and to win the world for Christ. Now, at this point I admit that if everybody who has received a touch of the civilisation of Christian countries ought to be recognised as of this society, in full standing and with equal rights—and if the faith uttered by the society may equally include all opinions which anybody likes to hold—and if its institutions are to be any institutions which the State happens to think will best accommodate them all—then undoubtedly I should have difficulty in showing any important good object to be secured by maintaining my views against Dr. Stanley's. But if these views are not accepted, then the problem remains for this society, so constituted, to express its peculiar life and genius, and to perform its peculiar functions. Now, observe that the benefit arising or to arise from this society, its power for good, depends very much indeed on certain difficulties which it meets because it is a society, and has to overcome. It is easy enough perhaps for me to come to my own conclusion as to what I can declare to be true, or what I ought to attempt in duty; at least I can be agreed with myself about it. But this society has to come to joint decisions on these subjects, it has to ripen and express a common mind, so as to attain the ends for which it is instituted. There must be consent; joint appreciation of truth, of duty, of the relative importance of truths and duties. Here there arises a peculiar tension, a necessity for dealing earnestly with problems which continually require solution, of entering into consultation, of ripening decisions. It must be done under a supreme regard to Christ's will, but also with a regard to the various apprehensions of brethren, for to this last we are expressly appointed to have regard in this department. Some things are to be fixed, some are to be left free; some things may be ordered so in one part of the Church, and differently in another. And in all this the Church has to realise its

peculiar position and calling, by a constant regard both to truth and to liberty, the authority of the Lord being supreme over both; a constant regard both to purity and to charity, the authority of the Lord being supreme over both.

The tension thus created in the Church, and the earnest exercise of mind and heart thence arising, the strenuous application of conscience to all these problems, is the moral preparative for the Church's becoming powerful in her offices. It is the means for creating and securing a force of thought and feeling, a sense of duty, a clear consciousness of the Lord's will, and of the circumstances in which it is to be gone about, which mere sporadic and individual Christianity would be most unlikely to attain.

But now all this is real and useful just in proportion as the society in every part of its peculiar and proper work holds itself free to do it out of faith and conscience. It must hold itself free, that it may feel its constant and direct responsibility, and realise its calling, that it may keep in view its ends, and express its own proper genius and life.

If you ask how we Christians in the Churches have answered this great responsibility, I reply at once that too often we have failed sadly, conspicuously. The evidences of it are too clear. There is plenty of the world in all the Churches and in all the Christians, and the effects have been seen. But he knows little of human nature, and little of the administration of the scheme of grace, who finds in such a confession a proof that it does not greatly matter how this business is arranged. All the more because we are so prone to fail, and do fail, it is imperative that the true conception of the Church's position and work should be ever before us, and the Church's obligations clearly bound upon us; all the more necessary to admit no principle that should allure us to resign ourselves to be governed, as a society, otherwise than by the sense of duty, ripened in the Church by the heed she gives to the Lord's

word and the Lord's providence. Therefore, in this sphere we cannot, and we will not, admit any authority imposing obligation to obey, to control the free movement of the society in its allotted work.

Now the Scottish minister, or the Scottish peasant, believing that the Church was instituted for such weighty ends as have been stated, took part in the work of it on that ground. He was to contribute his share, to the expression by the society of its own Christian mind and heart, in the appointed sphere. It was an important Christian duty directly arising out of his Lord's revealed will. The very first obligation lying on him as a Christian man was to be in Christ's Church, by profession, adherence, and sacramental seals, and in that Church to lend help according to his place and gifts in carrying out the objects of the society. He felt that the whole meaning and worth of the Church's being and doing hung on its being true to its own ideal. That implied direct responsibility, direct dependence, direct obedience. Therefore, he spoke, and he speaks of the Headship of Christ, by which he means that in duties which have their being for the Christian society simply by the Lord's institution, and by her relation to the Lord, she cannot shift her responsibility nor escape the Judge's eye. These are her work. She must do it. In doing it, as she must trust no other, so she must hear no other. The great use of the Church in the world is that, striving continually to apprehend and give effect to the great and various considerations which her Lord supplies, she should be herself.

An attempt is made, no doubt, by Dean Stanley to escape all such considerations, by alleging that in a Christian country Parliament represents well enough the mass of Christians, and may therefore be accepted as the representative of the Church, especially of the sound lay mind of it. The Church and the State become one. I will not now spend time on this transparent fallacy. If it were granted that Church and State are

or ought to be composed partly or even exactly of the same members, that would not go an inch towards showing that they are not distinct societies. The nature of a society depends not on the mere men as you count heads, but upon that in the men on which it rests, upon the ends for which and the conditions under which they join it, upon the act or authority which instituted it, and the grounds on which its maintenance is secured. Is Parliament elected, or ought it to be elected, to express and represent the care of Jesus Christ over His Church? Is Parliament fit to watch over a society in which authority on the one hand, and obedience on the other, are both alike to rest on faith and conscience, and not on force? Are the State, and membership in the State, and office and eminence in the State, grounded on spiritual life, spiritual attainments, spiritual gifts? This is, as Erskine of Dun said long ago, a mere confounding of all estates.

I know very well what the Dean will say, one thing at least that he will say, to views like these. He will say this is Hildebrandism—the Popish principle which makes the Church supreme in every matter she chooses to call her own. Or, varying the epithet, he will say, this is Laudianism, in principle identical with the Anglican High Churchism as it has existed both of old and of late—a system that exalts the Church in order to give dominion to the clergy—a system that fences in a sacerdotal domain into which neither common sense nor plain daylight shall be suffered to intrude. When objections take this form, the question that first occurs to me is—Does Dean Stanley suppose that the way to disarm Hildebrandism is to flee into the arms of Erastianism? Will he as a historian maintain that, in the days of Hildebrand himself, a mere Erastian principle reduced to practice throughout Europe would have been safe? Can any one estimate the corruption that would have ensued? Or will the Dean deny that precisely the most spiritual, the most intensely Christian,

men of the time were Hildebrand's most effective allies? That does not hinder that Hildebrandism should be judged to be, as indeed it was, a springing fountain of enormous and enduring evils. But it does suggest that there was something in Hildebrandism itself which appealed with immense power to the instincts of Christian hearts. Grant that Hildebrandism was false coin; still you shall confess that there must be true coin which it imitated and strove to represent; and your business is to search out the image and superscription of that. The same remark holds of Anglican High Churchism. We believe it to be a mischievous system, in a variety of ways. But as long as it is merely denounced from an Erastian position, whether by Broad Churchmen or by Low Churchmen, it will retain, and it will righteously retain, an element of power that will carry it through the conflict. Minds earnestly occupied with the prospects of the Christian religion as a public cause, and of Christ's Church as a divine institute, never will submit easily to the idea that such a body as the House of Commons ought to have the supreme earthly control of its constitution and its action.

As to Hildebrandism, it is enough to say that we recognise the duty of the State to regulate its action in its own sphere according to its own sense of duty, and to accept no authoritative dictation from the Church. The State is to have its own conscience; and the Church is to affect the State's action only as it can, upon the merits of each question, influence the common convictions and intelligence of those who form the State. Therefore the State is not only at liberty, but under obligation, to judge of its own duty for itself: the State ought to endow or disendow, establish or disestablish, concur with the Church or leave the Church to its own responsibilities and resources, as the State shall see good. Further, if the Church presumes to meddle authoritatively with things that belong to the State's wide domain—for instance, with pro-

perty, or legal rights, or the legal incidents of social relations, or the like—the State is simply to disregard the Church's interference, treat it as *res non,* maintain its own action according to its own convictions. But the State ought to take notice that a society has been set up, by no human authority, in which exist duties, privileges, relations, based solely on the common recognition, in conscience, of a common Lord. In this society what is done takes effect, not by force, but simply by the power that conviction and conscience happen to have in the minds of those concerned. First, then, the State is to take notice that the society, charged with duties in this peculiar sphere (called spiritual, because it takes effect only in the spirits of men by spiritual motives and considerations) will apply its own conscience to them, and will *not go against its conscience.* Secondly, it is claimed of the State that in regulating the outward incidents of such a society (money, buildings, claims for damages, and the like), the State should give full and equitable effect to the principle that such a society has a right to exist, and to do its own work according to its own conscience. If the State will not, the society will still do its own work, not minding the State, carrying out its decisions in the strength of its own spiritual resources. It will also submit peaceably to the wrong inflicted on it; but it will call that wrong persecution, and take all proper means to fasten the charge of persecution on the conscience of the nation. Thirdly, while the State may not judge that particular societies claiming to be, in their own extent, representative of the Church, do accurately represent in principles or spirit the Church as originally constituted, yet if these societies credibly profess to take up Church responsibilities as their own conscience guides them, then the State ought to *respect their conscience.* So long as they are dealing with things which it belongs to the Church to deal with, they are to be regarded as having a right to a *Church conscience* about those things. Fourthly, while the

State regulates its own action from its own point of view, both State and Church ought to count it of high importance that those matters which they touch upon from different sides should be regarded and treated by them, not upon discordant, but on harmonious principles. This, it is maintained, might to a large extent be attained by each society seeking, on its own responsibility, to give effect to revealed truth—the Church in all its concerns, the State in those to which revealed truth applies. But the State is acknowledged to retain all its rights and powers, whether it is Christian or not. Surely this is something different from Hildebrandism. The essence of Hildebrandism is to assert that the Church's decision ought to bind the State's conscience, and so decide the State's action.

Then as to Laudianism, I cannot possibly go here into detail. But we differ from Anglican High Churchmen in recognising the right of members of Churches to be satisfied in their own conscience of the propriety of those things which are required of them: we recognise the competency of an appeal to the Lord himself from the decisions of the external Church. And in harmony with these views, we do not unchurch those who break the external unity, if they do so only as professing to be obliged in conscience to do so, that they may follow what appears to them to be the Lord's will, which they cannot perform otherwise. We believe there may be, and often is, sin in such divisions; but we unchurch none merely on that account. Laudianism begins with the hierarchy, and prescribes from without and from above the conditions of accepted Church life. But we begin at the foundation. We still set before us, first, the ground of all Church life, in professing Christians joining together at their Lord's call. We acknowledge the reality of Church life in very low and imperfect degrees of it. We set up the model of what we judge the more perfect system, combining elements that vary in the clearness

of their revelation and in the order of their necessity; but we set it up as the goal to be attained; and we commend it, not as indispensable to the being of the Church, but as divinely given, that in the use and exercise of its various provisions the Church from age to age may form itself, may grow, may work to its great results. Therefore, also, our principles have never divided the clergy from the people. Say what you will of Church domination, our people have ever felt that their footing in the Church is as good and sure as that of the office-bearers. It is the people that have fought our battle and have carried the Church through. They have sometimes been before the ministers, they have never been far behind. And why? Why, because religious men in our Churches feel to their very finger-ends that it is the common cause of us all, one cause, in which their right is just as good as ours.

It is very convenient for the Dean to treat this principle as something either impossible to understand or impossible to appreciate. And when he comes to the Disruption, it is very convenient to dismiss it with the courteous sneer at the consciences of so many excellent men being wounded by a legal suit unintelligible out of Scotland. Is this unintelligible out of Scotland, that we refuse, as a Church, to take it as part of our duty to form, or profess to form, the pastoral tie between pastor and people, merely on the ground that a civil court bids us; that we refuse in like manner to fulfil or forbear any purely spiritual act on the mere ground of the same authority; that when it turned out that the terms of Establishment, in the view of the State, imported an obligation in point of duty to obey such decrees, the Free Church saved her honesty by renouncing the pay and privileges for which she could not fulfil the terms? Why, the whole world understood it; many parts of the world are feeling the effects of it. But does not Dr. Stanley himself understand it? That he does. Why, is not Erastianism, State supremacy, the very apple of his eye? Has he not contended

for it these last three years, as if on this subject alone he could become fanatical? Does he not argue habitually that the principle which applies to property, viz., that the State decides through its courts, on its own views of equity, all contests about it, carries with it, and ought to carry with it, the decision of everything else? Does he not denounce the opposite view as Hildebrandism and supremacy over the State? does he not represent supremacy of the State over the Church as the very optimism of the Church's condition? When in all these assertions he himself says Ay, has he not the least conception of what it means to say No: Yes, truly, he knows very well what it means. Meanwhile, let me once more fix your attention on this, that there is no doubt whatever as to the standard by which Dean Stanley measures all these matters. The essential features, he says, of Church and State connection are—"first, that the State should recognise and support some religious expression of the community; second, that this religious expression should be controlled and guided by the State."* These two elements are inseparable. Therefore he elsewhere argues that Parliament or the State is far the best and most suitable supreme power to control Church affairs. Nor is it easy to see how the argument can be resisted, that if this power can or ought to command authoritatively in one of the peculiar functions of the Church, so it may in all; and the only reason why it can be admitted to regulate one is because there is nothing inconsistent with the Lord's will in its regulating all or any. In that case, as the Dean puts it, the State may devolve a part of its functions, larger or smaller, upon General Assemblies or other ecclesiastical bodies, but retain its supremacy, and may at any time recall what it has given without introducing thereby any new principle or violating any to which effect had been given before.

* See Address at Sion College, republished in "Essays on Church and State."

Well, from this point of view it is that Dr. Stanley advocates the cause of Establishments as far as the question now before us is concerned. Standing here, he conveys to us his assurance that in the Established Church the Church has as much liberty as she has any need for. Standing here, he commends her as a Church not likely, happen what may, to sacrifice her position, or to fail to conform herself to whatever the condition of the nation or the indications of the State may seem to require. Standing here, he rejoices in the conviction that no scruples about Church independence will in any case induce that Church to resign the position in which she blesses the simple and the intelligent, and the heretics and the half heretics. Now, I am not to say whether this advocacy is accepted or repudiated. I don't know whether the Establishment welcomes it or no. But I see that things are running all this way in regard to Established Churches generally, The idea of guarding the Church's liberty in such Churches grows less and less practicable—indeed, it was always difficult—but it also apparently grows less and less intelligible. Like Dr. Stanley, men are tempted to try to represent that there really is no such question, that the whole affair is a dream; and they argue in particular, just as he does, that since in all Churches, Established and non-Established, the Courts will dispose of questions of property and actions of damages, that really settles everything, and no tangible distinction remains. That is a most significant token of the mode of view and feeling which men are cherishing. It indicates just a wish to get rid of the subject, to cease to see it, to escape from all trouble about it, and all obligations connected with it.

In that prospect I will not resign the hope that among those who will come forth and fight by our side will be some of those who are at present in the ranks of the Establishment itself. But the prospect is a very serious one in our existing circumstances; it is so for a reason which I will

give. Heretofore, even in Churches constituted on Erastian principles as to their general administration, the sense of a certain separate sphere and peculiar province has been maintained in this way, viz., that the Church's faith, settled by ancient creeds or by Reformation standards, was regarded as a thing by itself, not to be meddled with, not to be altered. Just because that was understood, a certain ecclesiastical firmness, though within narrow limits, could appear, which maintained the impression, that over against the State, the Church, as the representative of the faith, had a place and right of her own. But this modern Erastianism has it for one of its principal objects and ends, or I may say, relies on this as one of its principal conditions, that the Church's faith, through the action of the State, shall be made so latitudinarian as to leave religious sentiment perhaps, but little indeed of fixed and definite religious teaching. I believe that great forces in this country are working steadily to that result. But the considerations connected with the topic are more appropriate to my next lecture.

THIRD LECTURE.

I CONFESS that the topics which ought to be disposed of to-night are so weighty and so many that I approach them with hesitation; and I cannot conceal from myself the probability that my lecture will be only too visibly overloaded and overlaid. If, then, the transitions prove sometimes abrupt, and the treatment insufficient, it is due simply to difficulties which I have not been able to overcome. I intimated that in to-night's lecture I would consider the views of the gospel and of Christianity in the light of which the history of our Scottish Churches is to be understood; without a reference to which, therefore, it cannot be estimated.

It appears to me that the life and power of our Scottish Churches have always been dependent on two closely connected conditions. One is their theology; that which they have taught for truth on the relations of the human soul to God, on the way of salvation, and the principles of the administration of grace.

This theology Dean Stanley describes as negative. According to one report, he applies that term to our Confession. If he did so, I shall only deny the propriety of the description. The Confession is negative just in so far as any document containing strong and careful affirmations is apt to be negative, by denying the contrary of what it affirms. This holds also of the Articles of the Church of England, and indeed of most documents that profess to distinguish truths to be confessed from errors that are to be dismissed or denied. But, at

any rate, our theology, it is said, is negative. That is, we are mainly occupied in protesting against things which we do *not* hold. The Cameronian whom the Dean has found, who left his dying protest against nineteen heresies, besides the twentieth of Toleration, which he dwelt upon more at large, is produced probably as an extreme specimen. But we are to take it that this, though not always in such extremes, is the character of our theology. Probably there must be some foundation of truth in this. If we had leant at all to the other side, the Dean would have pointed out to us, perhaps, that we are not negative enough. Let us suppose, to save discussion, that on the whole, and at some times more especially, we have exceeded somewhat in keeping a very strict eye on what we were *not* to hold. In return for this concession, will the Dean concede that he is a little too negative on his side also? For we perceive that he disapproves of our theology; we are not to abide by that, but what he would recommend us to take in its room, or how he would have us remodel it we find it very difficult to discern.

But if the Dean believes that our Scottish theology has been only or mainly a thing of negations, he is extremely far out. In conceding, as I did just now, that possibly we have leant overstrongly at times to marking minutely what we did not hold, I conceded nothing of any great importance. The truth is no assertion, no positive faith is worth a farthing that does not contain in it virtual negations. Rash and presumptuous inferences, both positive and negative, have been drawn by theologians of all schools and in all ages; the mistake, in particular, of reasoning on an incomplete enumeration of alternatives, has multiplied needless and unjustifiable anathemas. For all that, unless a man will forbear to think, he must test his positives by negatives, and *vice versa;* if he knows what he means, he must know what he does not mean. A man may affect a precision which God has given him no means of attain-

ing. How far that has been the case is not to be settled off-hand by lecturers on either side. All that is really implied in the assertion, that we have occupied ourselves with negatives, so far as I concede it, is, first, that our people have been prone to think on theological subjects, and therefore to explicate their thinking both by yes and by no; and, secondly, that they have not been able to arrive at the theological perfection which enables men to hold both sides of theological questions. For some, upon any debated question, find the path of truth to lie in equally favouring both views; and thus they pass from the negative, which is an elementary stage, to that which may be called the ultra-positive, which is very near perfection. We have never got so far as this; however, we have been accustomed to count it no bad thing for a Church that its people should be disposed to think on the greatest of all subjects. Nor are we ashamed to maintain this, although we know that, the tendency existing, it appears at times in very unedifying forms; and that just as many a time a disreputable Englishman has turned out to a riot for Church and State, so many a time has a disreputable Scotsman debased religion by noisy argument for or against orthodoxy.

However, what I chiefly wish to say is this. Our Confession, or body of doctrine agreed upon by our ministers and office-bearers, touches certainly a good many points. But the theology on which our Churches live, the theology of our pulpits and our closets, is in reality simple, and grows obviously out of the Scriptures, if these are admitted to teach a few fundamental positions. It is in substance the theology of the Reformation; the Reformation doctrine of man's utterly fallen state; the Reformation doctrine of atonement and justification by faith; the Reformation doctrine of regeneration, and of the indebtedness of every one who is saved to a sovereign mercy that is unspeakable; and the Reformation doctrine of the free gospel call addressed to every

sinner; all this resting on the ancient catholic faith of the Trinity and the person of Christ. It may be said of it that it is wholly pivoted on two main positions, the conception of the fall, and the conception of the atonement—an intensely real fall, an intensely real redemption, God in Christ becoming known according to the relations implied in these two. Now, this working theology of our Churches, as I have said, is simple; but it is decided. The truths which compose it lose their meaning when faintly realised or dubiously fingered. They are indeed decisive truths, and many a conflict about them has arisen, and does arise, in earnest minds among us. But victory and emergence out of such a conflict consists in finding at last something to say aye to, implying something to say no to. And every one who intimately knows Scottish religion, the religion that is the life-spring of our Churches, knows how it lives in a positive faith realised according to the positive conditions supplied by these doctrines. These things, believed among us, are not negations. But they do, I confess, imply one great negation which thoroughly pervades our whole conceptions. They do imply that nature is not grace, and that grace is not nature. They do directly and peremptorily contradict a fashionable tendency of the time on that subject. How wonderfully grace may be adapted to nature—how wonderfully the one may, especially in some cases, be, as it were, hidden in the other—we are willing to learn. But the Scottish Churchman who has given up that distinction has to build up his beliefs again for himself, from a point not very far from the foundation. And the new structure will certainly not be the faith of the Scottish Churches.

I said that there were two conditions on which, as I think, the life and power of the Scottish Churches have always been dependent. I have described one; I proceed to the other. It is the common conception prevailing and cherished among us of what conversion is, what the divine life in the soul of man is.

This is closely connected with what I last described; for the conception now referred to is congruous to the fundamental theology which we teach, and is explained and justified on that ground. Yet it deserves to be separately named and separately considered. First, because it carries us from the department of truth to that of devout attainment; secondly, because experience proves that, without conscious insincerity, men may maintain a high standard of doctrinal orthodoxy, in our form of it as well as in other forms, in whom the element now referred to is not very operative, and even the conception of it is faint and uninfluential. So arises what we may call orthodox Moderatism. But the element now named is a great factor in our Scottish Church life; for immediate energy, for direct result, for inspiring force, at least as great a factor as that I named before. Existing as a common conception, it controls our Church life; it is both a motive power and a fly-wheel; it is that to which, consciously or unconsciously, other things are continually referred. It is both an influence which we feel and a result to which we tend.

Now, when I say all this, let me not be misunderstood. When we ascribe so much to it, let us not be thought to assume that all our people stand actually in this grace—we habitually warn them to take no such thing for granted—nor that all our elders, nor that all our ministers, are in the experience of it, however deplorable it be if they are not. All positive decisions about individuals we decline. Nor are we assuming that it exists among us in a superlative degree, or in a greater degree than among other Churches. We know it is far safer to suspect that we have less than to presume that we have more. We hope in God, indeed, that we have a measure of it among us. But I assert only that this common conception has generally held the convictions of our Churches as a certain reality; whether by some largely realised and experienced, or by some humbly aspired after, or by some felt

as impending overhead, as it were, while they are conscious that it is not effectually sought or honestly dealt with. This conception, I repeat, dominates our Scottish Churches in so far as they represent genuine Scottish Churchmanship. As compared with some other Christians, it is not our manner to be ready to make large professions. We seldom express ourselves very freely as to individual state and prospects. On all points of feeling, indeed, we are perhaps too little ready to be frank. But while we may not be ready to say much as to what we have felt of this, innumerable voices among us will testify that they believe it, and, more than that, that they have seen it. We have seen it in many a life mastered and pervaded by the faith and consciousness of redemption; we have seen it in many a life manifestly moving under the influence of the realised relation to sin and to the Saviour, and growing into His likeness; so that the meaning of it is very well known among us, and the sense of it pervades our system. Presbyterianism, indeed, is so constructed that it never formulates ecclesiastical judgments about the existence or non-existence of this great element in individual cases. Its working is regulated so as to provide for the divine life arising only by degrees to conscious certainty and establishment. Presbyterianism acknowledges that seeds may be sown in the heart of childhood which manifest their unquestionable peculiarity only after years. Presbyterianism is prepared to work not only for immediate and manifest fruits, but also for gradual developments and long results. Nevertheless, the conception to which I refer is an ever-present and regulating consciousness. If there are those among us, as there are, of course, who have no regard to it or faith in it, they do not sway the Church's movements; generally they feel consciously disqualified from attempting to do so.

Nor let it be thought that this conception is a rigid iron thing, that sits like a fetter on the heart of the Church. It

may be apprehended on various sides, with various degrees of fulness, with various estimates of the elements it contains. Of all who share in it, there are no two probably who represent it to themselves exactly in the same way. And yet morally it is one—one great type through all, capable of being approached on a thousand sides, but felt by each to be a unity, the ground of a common consciousness, whence proceed various forms of action, in which also the same unity is recognised.

Now, I will take an illustration of what I mean on this last point from a quotation made by Dean Stanley, but not on his part, as I am disposed to think, thoroughly understood. It is in his notice of Dr. Chalmers. The notice, I may say, is singularly fresh and hearty, worthy of the great old man it depicts, and most honourable to the Dean himself; but it closes with a sudden significant turn, which almost makes one smile, so adroitly does the Dean, if I understand him, seduce Dr. Chalmers to serve for a moment in the ranks of the Dean's own army. A sentence from Chalmers' private writings is made to suggest an inference; and then a conversation which occurred at Oxford between Dr. Chalmers and the Dean is represented as supporting that inference; the truth being that the inference in unfounded, and the conversation at Oxford has nothing to do with it whatever. "Oh that He possessed me with a sense of His holiness and love, as once He possessed me with a sense of His power and His all-pervading agency"—that is the sentence; and the inference is that he looked back to those earlier days, and spoke of them with a regretful feeling—those being "days in which he lived in the great ideas which are at the foundation of all religion." And the conversation at Oxford, being so catholic in its tone, is held further to justify the impression that a certain regress from his last days to his first ought to be recognised, a relenting of middle-life intensities, which brought the end not to the same note perhaps, but to the same key with the beginning.

This is a sheer delusion. There was not a day in Dr. Chalmers' life, from one end to the other, nor a principle ever held by him, that would have hindered his expressing his interest in Oxford, and his admiration of it, and of whatever is great in the Church or literature of England, in the very same terms. It was a habitual feeling with him, and pervaded his life. As to the sentence quoted, I marvel that one who has read the literature of so many Christian schools as the Dean could so mistake it. The days referred to were referred to just because in Dr. Chalmers' belief they were the days *before* the awaking of the true religious life. In those days, in Dr. Chalmers' case, as in many another, a glow of earnest sentiment and high enthusiasm gathered around the great ideas of the Divine power and omnipresence. They were true thoughts, and worthy to be realised with such a glow of feeling; and this perception of truth he ascribed to the Author of all good gifts. But it was his deliberate and most assured judgment that this kind of religion, in his own case, was the religion of one who had not returned to God, who had not bowed to God's will, who had never realised his own relation to God, who was not at peace with God. It was his deliberate judgment that this religion had not made him a man of God, and that by and by it proved every way a failure. And that completeness of delighted sentiment, that thorough entrancement in the great thought he spoke of, was possible, just because the feeling never touched the real question between God and him, never revealed to him his true self nor the true God. A change came. The great question of sin arose in its simple reality, the question of salvation. The revelation came of a Saviour, of an atonement, of grace, of the divine, omnipotent love that saves the lost, of holiness that thrilled his heart with a sorrow and a longing he had never known before. Thenceforth he lived in a new world—a far greater world, a far intenser. As the narrow material heavens

of the old astronomers have broken up and widened, to our eyes, to infinite depths that our souls ache to fathom, so his moral and spiritual horizons fell back every way. But while it opened for him a far truer, deeper peace, that new world was in one sense less peaceful than the former; for him, as for each man who experiences such a history, it became a scene of conflict—hopeful, trustful, joyful conflict, yet stern, and often weary. Ah, to have the whole soul brought to final harmony with the hopes and longings that this new world inspired, with the new apprehension of what God is, Christ is!—that was so great a thing, and a thing so withstood by the strange rebellious principle within, that the heart strove and yearned with sorrowful and contrite longings. To be so attuned to the meaning, and possessed by the power of holiness and of love, the pitying love that bends over sinners, as once he had been with impressions of magnificent and unwearied power! But the latter, how possible, how unresisted, how easily, in those early days, it could touch a mind like his; the former, how hard and high, how all but impossible, the continued experience of life through death. "Oh that He possessed me with a sense of His holiness and His love, as once He possessed me with a sense of His power and all-pervading agency." "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." "Nevertheless, I live, and the life I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." The words reveal a thought which he did much to restore among us to its old power; a conception the failure of which falls always like a blight on our Churches.

Now, I am not saying that either of the two conditions I speak of are peculiar to us, although each is somewhat distinctly different from the conditions which fill a corresponding place in a large section of the Church of England. What I say is, that they are so vital to our history that their vigour

or decay is among the first things to be noted in the study of it.*

Now, it fell of course in the Dean's way, in his recent lectures, to point out those forms of religious teaching and religious life which appeared to him most worthy of regard. Besides his direct counsels, his whole lectures were pervaded by silent or half-uttered assumptions with respect to the proper standard on these matters. And yet, though his conclusions went to sway most powerfully our judgment about such prime conditions of our Church life, I find nothing like an examination either of what they were or what they ought to be, or how they may compare with those of other Churches. His own standard does indeed appear plainly enough. But anything like an appreciation or estimate of what that is on which the life and the proper work of Churches depends, what it has depended on among us, what it ought to depend on in time to come—any impression even that this question is momentous—does not appear. Our theology has been "negative;" that is almost all the light we get. His own standard appears most plainly in his appreciation of Moderatism. But what tangible principles does he present? The Moderates, he thinks, were not altogether destitute of some connection with religious earnestness, and they developed a striking activity in general literature. For the rest, he likes the men, he likes their tone; as mental companions he gets on with them, and is at ease with them, therefore he recommends them. Did ever mortal trifle so with life questions? Was it not worth considering whether

* An amusing illustration of what we in Scotland historically *ought* to be comes to my knowledge as I correct these sheets. A Hungarian student, wishing to study Technology in the University of Edinburgh, writes for information. He does not know much about our institutions, but in order to be sure of his letter arriving at that which represents the main stream of our national life and development, he draws from the depths of his historical consciousness the following address:—"An die Calvinisch-Reformirte Puritanische Universitäts Buchhändlung in Edinburg:"—*i. e.*, To the Calvinistic Reformed Puritanical University Library, Edinburgh.

there are not, or have not been, religious forces at work here, as elsewhere, divided from Moderatism by an antagonism far deeper than the mere Scottish fervour. Was it not worth while to ask whether the decisive forces of Scottish religion can put on Moderatism at his recommendation, at any less expense than that of dying? The main difficulty here is to get the really vital issues into any connection at all with the Dean's line of discussion, and with the assumptions that appear to pervade it.

Let us take, however, what we can get. The views which pervade the lectures come out, as I have said, most distinctly in Dr. Stanley's exhibition of the Moderate party in the Church of Scotland. You are aware that he dwells on this element of our history with peculiar predilection. Heralded by one or two bright precursors, bright morning stars that rose before the day, the embodied tendency begins to make itself seriously and permanently felt at the close of the seventeenth century. It is introduced as the representative of "one of the most indispensable of Christian duties," as recommended by the Apostle Paul. In depicting the reign of the party, whatever can be claimed for them as a virtue or a praise is brought out in the brightest relief. And the closing counsels with which the lectures were wound up were manifestly determined by the position that Moderatism, on the whole, and making some deductions for the imperfections of every mixed party or institution, had set the true model, had erected the safest guiding lights for Scottish Christianity.

Now, in asking your attention to the topic thus raised—which I will treat simply as a topic of last century, disclaiming all covert allusions to parties whom I do not name—I am under an obvious disadvantage. Most people here will probably not be persuaded that the question is worth discussing. What is the use, they will say, of any man coming down here to praise up the religious services rendered to Scotland by the Moderates?

Or, if any one does, what can it profit to give him an answer? They tell a story of Frederick the Great of Prussia, that on one occasion Sulzer (I think), an earnest educationist, possessed with the then current notions of the natural goodness of man, was speaking to the King of his educational plans. The King listened and conversed with great interest, until Sulzer began to enlarge to him upon the goodness of human nature and the perfectibility of mankind. Quoth the King—"Ah, my dear Sulzer, stop now, don't tell me that; *I* know the confounded race too well!" We know the Moderates too well; Highlands and Lowlands know them. No flowing periods, and no selected anecdotes, and no clever personages depicted at their best, will ever persuade us that we don't know the Moderates. Notwithstanding, ladies and gentlemen, I believe it will be very instructive for us to look for a little at what the Dean has thus called us to re-examine.

But before entering on this task I really must refer to one or two of the names which the Dean has claimed as precursors of Moderatism in the early and middle part of the seventeenth century. And, first of all, Robert Douglas is made to do duty, on no better ground apparently than that he seems to the Dean to have been a man of commanding character, good sense, and statesmanlike qualities: therefore he was a Moderate. Here the *ratio decidendi* bears very hard on all *but* Moderates. But I must say that the conclusion arrived at is very hard usage of poor Robert Douglas himself. He was associated with the Resolutioners, certainly, when our Church was divided into Resolutioners and Protesters, each accusing the other of unfaithfulness to the Covenant; and it fell to his lot to be deceived and outwitted by Sharp in 1660. But neither of these facts, nor both, will prove him a Moderate. How could a man be a Moderate who was thoroughly evangelical in his teaching, who was a *jus divinum* Presbyterian, looking on Presbytery as the Lord's ordinance and Prelacy as

man's invention, and who contended zealously for a settlement on pure Covenanting principles. Really, when I find Robert Douglas declaring of Prelacy, in terms which are surely rather strong, that "the Lord will pluck up that stinking weed," I think the Dean would have made out a fully better case if he had described him as a highflyer, and as one of those fighting Scotsmen whose zeal so far outran their discretion.

But then we have Leighton. Leighton notoriously cared nothing for the questions debated between Presbyterian and Prelatist. If that will make him out a Moderate, the case is proved. But though Leighton attached only a moderate degree of importance to one question debated in his own time, it is mere trifling to assume, on that ground, that he is to be ascribed to the party called Moderate in a succeeding age, or that he had any sympathy with their prevailing and characteristic tendencies. Would God they had manifested some sympathy with his! Many Scotsmen have thought Leighton's ecclesiastical course a mistake, and thought also that he found it so; and for a time, not unnaturally, a man associated by office with the system of the Restoration was regarded with distrust, and spoken of in terms of some depreciation. But the day is very long gone by since any of us have doubted the integrity of his intentions or the holiness of his character. And I suspect it could be shown that those who did most to bring Leighton's works into the repute they have long maintained were Scottish Presbyterians and English Nonconformists. Leighton's character and writings have been habitually cherished by those in Scotland who are most averse to Moderatism, and who recognise in him the very spirit which Moderatism lacked. Among my own very earliest recollections are those of an aged lady, very dear to me, whose life was one continual strain of overflowing piety—a long pilgrimage of faith rising at last into an unbroken Beulah of praise and prayer. It was piety nursed under the purest Scottish and Presbyterian influences.

But my impressions of Leighton were formed first by the delight I used to see her take in perusing and reperusing "that blessed Exposition." What would she have said had she been told that Leighton was a Moderate?

Carstairs, too, is claimed, with more apparent plausibility. The truth is, Carstairs united in himself the possibilities, so to say, of both the parties who afterwards divided the Church of Scotland. He had sympathies that associated him with both, but his peculiar career distinguished him from both. He was one of those men, formed in times of revolution, who acquire a dexterous adaptiveness of character, and become expert in estimating the precise possibilities and flexibilities of every form of principle, even those professed by the most opposite parties. When such men are personally unprincipled, they become the most thorough and successful intriguers. When, on the contrary, they are men who do adhere to principles which they value, and are not aiming at selfish ends, their peculiar talent appears in effecting adjustments in the most difficult circumstances, by which principles are saved, as it were, by a hairbreadth, or appear perhaps with the loss of a part of their skirts. Carstairs joined this politic bent and adaptive skill to dispositions which led him to do what he thought his best for Presbyterianism. He is not so unlike the Moderates—not so removed from Dr. Stanley's own position as are most of our greater Presbyterian names previous to the eighteenth century. It is unreasonable to class him as a Moderate; but it may well be maintained that measures in which he took part preluded and prepared the actual development and ascendancy of the Moderate party.

But I must hasten on to look at the Dean's account of the Moderates themselves. Postponing the question as to the true genius and bent of the party, let us look for a minute at the account the Dean has given us of those properly religious attainments which may be claimed for the

Moderate period of the Scottish Church. He was sensible, apparently, that one is apt to look for something Christian, nay, even something distinctly and emphatically Christian, in the fruits of a tendency which is to be accepted as the type which ought to prevail in a Christian Church. He has furnished us therefore with a list; singularly scanty it is. And yet, scanty as it is, almost everything in it rests on a transparent misconception. Dr. Stanley thinks he may select anything that pertains to the Revolution Church of Scotland, any person or thing that remained within it, and constitute it, if it suits his purpose, into a representative or specimen of our Moderate period. What was outside of the Church, or went outside of it, is to stand alone on the one side, and be contrasted with any persons or phenomena found within it on the other side. This, of course, is thoroughly confusing and misleading. Inside the Church, and standing on its constitution and traditions, there was a party the very life of which was opposition to Moderatism. The persistent disregard of this produces the strangest travesties of the history. Besides, the ascendancy of the Moderate party, revealing its genius and applying its principles, did not begin till the eighteenth century had advanced some way. But the Dean takes all together from the Revolution in 1688. In this way Thomas Boston himself must be made to figure as a representative man of the Moderate period.

The Dean's case is of this kind. He tries to show, in some instances, that in the Moderate party a basis of liberal sentiment, of wide and generous tolerance, proved to be not inconsistent on fitting occasion with some devout aspiration and attainment, and with some measure of religious zeal. It was consistent with zeal for the extension of the gospel in the Highlands, and it was consistent with some earnest religious awakenings, and with cordial recognition of earnest religious labourers.

Now, in the first place, I doubt the tolerance itself. I doubt it not in the case of the Scottish Moderates only, but I doubt it in the case of the whole class to which they belong. The personal amiability of some of them is unquestionable. But on the part of men of this class there is apt to be a very ostentatious tolerance towards many forms of opinion, combined with a fixed dislike of certain manifestations of positive religious faith. This dislike, when the class gains the upper hand, has often shown itself in a resolute purpose to keep down what they dislike. The Dean has admitted that the principles of Mackenzie—"the bluidy Mackenzie"—were strictly akin to those of the Moderate party: of his feelings the less we say the better. Certainly Mackenzie's practice is full to the point as an illustration of the remarks I am now making. But the same thing appeared in the conduct of the party itself. A hard disregard of the feelings of conscientious men, and a pleasure in breaking them to the yoke, if possible, characterised the party throughout. It appeared in their mode of dealing with the first Seceders, it appeared in their dealings with Gillespie, it appeared in the repressive system which they carried through, at the cost of alienating the hearts of the very flower of the Scottish people.

Here I may remark that the Dean, viewing as he is pleased to do—I make no assumptions on the subject—the existing Established Church as the successors and representatives of Moderate excellency, panegyrises the liberality they have shown in opening their pulpits to divines of the Church of England. "It has in these latter days set," he says, "a noble example of liberality to all the Churches, by its readiness in welcoming within its churches the ministrations of prelates and prelatists, no less than of its own seceding members." Surely the Dean cannot be aware how drolly this sounds in Scottish ears. The Established Church has not set the example, but followed the example. In 1799, in the days of Moderate

supremacy, an Act was passed prohibiting all ministers to employ in any service any one not qualified according to the laws of the Church to accept a presentation to a pastoral charge. That Act was rescinded in 1842, when the evangelical party was in the ascendancy, and ministers were left, as of old, to employ the services of brethren of other Churches. After the Disruption the state of things in the Establisment was restored which had existed from 1799 to 1842; and it is only recently that it has been relaxed again, so as to allow the Established Church minister the same right which U.P. and Free Church ministers possessed by the common law of their Churches, recognising the orders of the sister Churches of the Reformation, while in the Free Church this right was granted by an express statutory permission in addition. It is nothing strange in our Churches that men episcopally ordained, and having the confidence of the pastor, should occasionally minister in them. It seems, however, to be a very arduous operation to undertake it. All England cried out with amazement at the magnanimous effort recently made by two prelates in this direction. They seemed to suppose that the effort to receive them must, on the Scottish side, be equally overwhelming. There is a mistake here. We are always glad to receive ministers of other Churches who are good gospel preachers, provided they do it in a straightforward way, and don't talk nonsense afterwards about "mission services."

But to return to the Moderates. With their tolerance, be it more or less, they combined some religious activity, be it more or less. And first, the Dean tells us, some zeal was shown in setting up ordinances in the Highlands, in the remoter districts of the Highlands.

I know that from a period very soon after the Revolution particular attention was directed by the Assembly to the settlement of ordinances and of education in the Highlands, and that the Royal bounty, granted early in the eighteenth century,

became a means of regularly prosecuting that work. But I do not know that any particular credit is due on this account to the Moderate element in the Church; neither do I know that as that party attained to dominion any increased zeal on the subject appeared. Precisely the reverse, as far as I am aware or can form a judgment. But I do also know that, more than a hundred years before, hopeful measures were set on foot for overtaking the wants of the Highlands, which were interrupted by the oppressions then inaugurated by the Crown. I do know that the only men who laid a strong hand on the Highlands for good were men who were emphatically *not* Moderates. I do know that the people in the Highlands, speaking generally, never gave their confidence in these matters to any men who were Moderates. I know, indeed, that in the Highlands, more than anywhere else, earnest practical religion and Moderatism were currently and commonly set against one another by the people as natural and born contraries. In my grandfather's own parish, after his death, they used to hold meetings for many years in the open air rather than attend the ministry of a Moderate, while yet they adhered to the Church of Scotland and waited for better times. That happened "under the reign of the Moderates;" but I can assure all whom it may concern that nothing would have been esteemed a bitterer insult by those honest men than to be told that in adhering to the Church they were adhering to the reign of Moderatism, and illustrating the fine fruits of faith and a good conscience which Moderatism was able to produce.

But "under the reign of the Moderates" there were other signs of life in the Church. Yes, for under the reign of Moderatism there was a number of ministers, and a great number of people, who believed themselves to stand on the genuine constitution of their Church, and its doctrine, in opposing the Moderates. I don't say that no one who voted on the Moderate side, especially in the first half of the century, showed

an interest in the religious movements alluded to by Dr. Stanley; but I say, without fear of contradiction, that all these movements were formed, promoted, and advanced by those who opposed Moderatism, and were by the Moderates habitually discountenanced and disliked.

Dr. Stanley has referred to the case of Whitefield: he was taken up by the Establishment, and decried by the Secession. There is no doubt of it. But the circumstances should be understood. Whitefield proposed to come down, as the Seceders understood, prepared to negotiate terms on which they might co-operate. Some negotiation was needed, for the Seceders, as I mentioned in a former lecture, had entangled themselves in a form of testimony which embarrassed their own action in an unusual case like this. Ultimately, Whitefield declined to enter on any special terms with them; and he held himself free, besides, to preach for all who would take him as he was. The Seceders felt it trying, for reasons easily assigned. They were in the very fire and glow of their Secession, for it was a year or two after the Act that had finally cut them off. Their ecclesiastical programme, with all its views of existing facts and parties, was still bran-new, and had to be maintained to their people and to all the world. They were conscious, and honestly conscious, that zeal for evangelical truth was the moving spring of their own action, and was the occasion at least of a great part of the opposition they experienced. They believed and maintained that the cause of evangelical truth was to be supported by doing what they had done, by leaving the Established Church; and it concerned them much, as they believed, to maintain that impression in the minds of their own people. Further, they were still a very small body, and subject to the influences which affect such bodies. The arrival of Whitefield, with his great reputation, to confound all the dividing lines, to be a kind of incarnate defiance of testimonies, and to exhibit the cause of evangelical truth as perfectly dissociated from existing divisions,

was of course a trial. It became a temptation, and I do certainly think that the Seceders did not at the time deal successfully or magnanimously with the temptation. But I think it was a much greater and more tempting temptation than is commonly supposed. And hence, though ultimately they got the better of it, and Ralph Erskine and Whitefield were reconciled, which should be noticed when the story is told, in the meantime they elected to stand out against Whitefield and all his proceedings with such weapons as the case admitted. The same temper, arising very much from the same temptations, appeared in the severity of the language they employed regarding the Cambuslang work and similar movements. But was all this a quarrel between the Seceders and the Moderates? Why, the very bitterness of it arose from this, that it was a quarrel between those who shared the same principles and were conscious, both of them, of being opposed to the Moderates. The Seceders would have opposed the Moderates with a great deal of equanimity, and disposed of them, too, without much trouble. But the very jet of the quarrel lay here, that men who, as they thought, ought to have been Seceders, ought to have joined them in maintaining "the Lord's cause among their hands," persisted in standing on the constitution of the Scottish Church as still intact; they persisted in maintaining that that was the right way to maintain the Lord's cause against the Moderates. It was the existence of this influence (as the Seceders thought, a misleading and confusing influence, essentially treacherous indeed to the true issue) which irritated and vexed them. And for a time it disposed them to disbelieve in the possibility of any extensive good being done by their old friends. But both parties were quite conscious that this was the true state of the case, and they reasoned with one another on that footing.

The Seceders, at first few in number, but rapidly increasing as the century advanced, maintained in Scotland the same

cause with those within the Established Church who were commonly called Evangelical. The Seceders carried it on with more expansive force, and with more rapid and palpable results, because they were not hampered by the trammels to which their allies within the Church were subjected. To them we owe it that in many a parish, where but for them evangelical religion would have died out, a vigorous Christian life arose and spread abroad. Those who joined them adopted their Testimony, in its different successive forms; there was little to hinder their doing so; it was but a version of the good old cause. But what drew the people to them, and multiplied their congregations with such rapidity, was not the mere series of points on which they stated their division; it was not even the protest against patronage, though that went home to the Scottish heart. It was the authentic declaration of the gospel, preached broadly and directly, and felt to be the power of God unto salvation. The right which the United Presbyterians have to claim their part in the representation of the Scottish Church goes deeper far than the assertion of a few ecclesiastical points and traditions. They stood for Truth and Life in days when the battle went sore against both. And as long as Truth and Life are maintained in Scotland, it will not be forgotten that a great share of the honour of having carried them safe through some of our darkest days was given by God to the Seceders. Why, then, the Dean may ask, did they make so much of the assertion of points of Church duty? Because, we answer, Truth and Life never gain the upper hand in any of the Churches without awakening a resolute conscience regarding Church duties as well as other duties.

But now, how are we to represent this Moderatism? What was it. I will say what I think of it. In doing so I cannot offer to you the artistic touches which never fail in any of the Dean's sketches. But I feel very confident that mine is the truer reading.

The rise of a party, not disposed to feel strongly on the points which Scottish Churchmanship has usually put forward, is often traced to certain elements which found a place in the Church at and shortly after the Revolution Settlement—viz., the ministers who had previously accepted the indulgence (though these, I think, are rather hardly used by some of our historians), and still more, the "curates"—those who, having held cures under the Episcopacy, came in and submitted to the Presbyterian *régime*. Then, since many of the curates were not very good to begin with, and since, presumably, it was not the best of them who were so ready to conform, and since the very process itself must have been rather damaging and demoralising in the case of those who had previously professed high Episcopalian principles, it can be explained that this party was not merely cold in reference to the principles of their Church, but also at the same time low in tone, morally and spiritually. This explanation is obviously grounded in facts and reason. There were such classes of men, and the statement correctly describes the influence which their history and circumstances might be expected to exert upon them. Materials of this kind, reproducing themselves from generation to generation, unquestionably existed. Such materials formed an element in the Moderate party which bulked largely in the rank and file, and communicated to the whole party much of the temper and the temperature which afterwards distinguished it. Such materials also lay ready to the hands of all who were inclined to work the Church to State ends or to private interests.

At the same time, I am not content to rest in this account of the Moderate party as sufficient. Another source of influence must be considered in order to account for the impulse which gave momentum to the leading minds, and reacted from them on their party and on the whole Church. No remote processes of inference are needed in order to exhibit what it was and how it wrought.

Placed in circumstances of great disadvantage by the commotions of the past, the Scottish Church (and the same was true of the country generally) had lost ground. Culture, development of literature, development of taste, deliberate adaptation of means to ends, had been wofully checked and marred. The peaceful processes by which those who teach and those who learn find out one another's meaning, the processes by which mind, in each generation, is laid under contribution for new and various services, had been sadly interrupted. One of the matters often mentioned in this connection, and which may serve for an instance, is the style of preaching. A man who preached as he could and when he could, in a house or on a hillside, was not likely to take much care of his style. And the habit of the pulpit had retained, in point of fact, much of the old dialect, and much of the old way of dividing and arranging topics; it did so at a time when in general literature the most rapid improvement was taking place in these very particulars—an improvement which that age was rather disposed to overvalue. That is only one instance. After the settlement of affairs, when the prospect of quiet times seemed to be confirmed, men turned eagerly to recover the lost ground, and to place themselves as soon as possible on the level of their age.

Men of all tendencies in the Scottish Church set about this work. They did so with increasing eagerness, as they became more fully aware how much leeway they had to make up. Now their enterprise fell at a remarkable time in the mental history of Europe. It was one of those times when new impulses set in, moving men strongly into new paths, or when impulses generated before begin strongly to affect the general mind. Philosophy, politics, science, education, all felt the breath of a change beginning or proceeding—a change not of doctrine only, but of method, and in all departments men believed themselves coming into clearer light and on more

solid ground. The experimental, the humanly practical and reliable, that was to be the guide now. As to religion, the movement was partly *in* religion, partly *from* it. I say partly *from* it; for men said—"Let us be done with these discussions; let us cultivate manners, letters, material interests; good sense and good taste will furnish us with all the religious views we need, and will breed a milder temper than the old dogmatism did." Partly *in* it; and the tendency was to rationalise all doctrines, and lower the peculiarities of the Christian system, to Socinianise, in short. Such seemed to be the spirit of the age, of its foremost and choicest men. A specific influence more or less connected with these tendencies came across the Border. The preaching most in repute there was of the school of Tillotson. That amiable and high-minded man was the head of a school which eminently studied to speak to the age. For that purpose it inclined to reason with men on their own principles, and to be sparing in the assertion of things that might be controverted. It strove to speak in a tone undeniably sensible and practical, laying the stress on the moral elements in Christianity, on Christian virtue and its advantages. This was the new, the cultivated, the reflective style of preaching, this the fresh working of Christian thought, this the defensible mode of Christianity.

In all such times there is a kind of enchantment in the air. The new way of it advances with such an imposing mien, with such ample hopes, especially with such promise of fresh life or new reality, that people are gained at once. To resist the mental fascination is too painful. The eighteenth century indeed was not to turn out in the long run to be a very great affair, for reasons which are well known, and which I must not stay to describe. Still it had its own real gains and acquisitions to offer; and it had its own attractions at the outset. Those attractions were not connected with any views

towards the supernatural or the celestial, towards lofty speculation or high enthusiasm. Quite the other way.

This was the age. We rather look down upon it now, but it did by no means look down upon itself, and we must grant it to have been in point of fact the opening of a period of great advance in some particular directions. Such as it was—with its treasures and its hopes, its achievements, and its pursuits, its temptations and its benefits—the hopeful men of our Scottish Church were to throw themselves upon it and make the most of it.

I have said that men of various schools and tendencies did so; no doubt, with various degrees of wisdom, fidelity, piety, or the reverse. You cannot do much in the way of discriminating them at first. Gradually you see them settling into two tendencies. The first and larger party are composed of men, some of them most able and highly cultivated, others rather pretentious than able, whom the spirit of the age has mastered. I am describing a party, not every particular member of it. The spirit of the age is what they live in, believe in. The objects which it recommends, the benefits it proposes to confer, the methods on which it relies, have won them. These things have become with them first and uppermost—so real, so reliable, so resistless do they appear. These influences determine and mould the view they take of Christian religion, and the way in which they propose to regulate its administration. Confident many of them, most of them, that Christian religion is well capable of being victoriously defended, and that it is to be resolutely maintained, their views of it are still regulated and controlled rather by an extrinsic standard than by an intrinsic and native one. Opposed to them is a smaller party, always numbering among it men who are well abreast of the acquirements of their time, distinguished by maintaining views and principles which to the other side seem both antiquated and unenlightened. The former are the leaders and lights of the Moderate

party, the latter of the Evangelical. The former—I still speak of a class, and do not apply the description to every member of it—have placed the second interest first, culture before truth and life, by a silent, subtle process, always maintaining that this is the best way to provide for the first interest itself. Among the latter survive those two conditions which I spoke of as the life-blood of Scottish Christianity. But they survive, maintained with difficulty, sometimes faintly, always under pressure.

The impulse to which I have ascribed the highest element in Moderatism, that which led it for a time, is an impulse, as you will observe, which does not so much bias men in theology, but rather biases them *from* it. Nevertheless, a very distinct theological tone arises as the product of it. It is a tendency to assuage or to obscure doctrinal distinctions, to shun clear assertions, to reduce Christianity, as nearly as may be, to a form of natural religion touched with historic associations and warmed with the faint glow of an old but dying enthusiasm. And the reason is plain: life must be harmonised to some fundamental note or key. When it is to be harmonised to culture instead of to decisive Christian convictions, then the Christianity that is retained (reverently retained, I do not question) must be modified. It must be made to speak more softly, and to accommodate itself to the exigencies or suggestions of another interest. This, men then persuade themselves, is its best estate—the true, the finished, the meek, the perfect Christianity. The development of all this in the Church of Scotland may be marked by a series of stages. First, you have a generally latitudinarian tendency, with a disposition to dwell only slightly on what is peculiar to Christianity as a supernatural revelation. Still, a certain marked devoutness is retained, and a dignified Christian demeanour cultivated and cherished—the idea being entertained that a more true and perfect type of Christian teaching and life is thus presented.

This style has its representatives in such men as Principal Leechman of Glasgow. In those who receive their training under such men an advance is discernible. This generation has practically embraced the idea that Christian teaching and influences, though they must be presumed to be important, are so mainly as they contribute to promote the social excellences which the age values; and so everything peculiar to Christianity figures as subordinate to those especial types of social and literary excellence. Such men were Carlyle, coarse and jovial, and Robertson himself, so able, refined, and literary. Partly contemporary with them, but rather following at a more advanced stage, are men who have become conscious that all this requires a scheme of teaching to sustain it very different from the Church's faith; and they are irritated by that consciousness. They writhe under the standards to which the Church is bound, which an earlier generation seemed not to care to question; so came the lapse into Socinianism in various parts of the Church. It is accounted for partly as the adoption of a theological system more congenial to the prevailing spirit of the men; partly, however, it is just the expression of revolt, in the form that happens to be suggested and to lie nearest; and so it was connected in the case of many with a revolt against a number of other things besides sound doctrine. It was in this stage and in this phase that Moderatism became most offensive, most earthly, most injurious to the best interests of the country.

Setting culture before truth and life, the secondary interest before the primary, Moderatism became inevitably the antagonist of our Scottish religious life. It opposed itself both to the theology, and to the conception of conversion and life towards God, which I dwelt on at the outset. The theology sank into insignificance, lost its meaning, and in many cases became hateful, though some of the party always adhered, even stringently, to its formal positions. The conception of conversion was still more speedily

sunk in the notion of general improvement and moral culture. The change took place half-unconsciously; for men were hardly aware at first that in taking up the new ground they must move so decidedly off the old. But it took place, as I have said, inevitably, and also speedily. Thus by the road of a high enthusiasm and a zealous culture the upper sections of the Moderate party reached the same result which was reached in the lower sections by the road of mere earthliness, selfishness, and secularity. It is indeed a most striking thing to mark how instinctively the refined and cultivated members of the party made common cause with the basest against evangelical religion, as the natural enemy of both. The party included a large number of respectable, kindly, hospitable men, in addition to those literary luminaries whom the Dean enumerates. But he may be assured that the Church politics of the Moderates, bad as they were, were only after all the index on the dial. The operative force lay deeper, and was every way pernicious. I do not forget, in saying this, that all parties are mixed. There were men among the Moderates of whom, individually, no one would wish to say an unkind word. And among their opponents, in the party called Evangelical, there were mere partisans, bad and hollow men, all the worse because they professed principles which did not regulate their lives. The whole Evangelical party indeed felt the chilling influence of the time, and were less high-hearted than they might have been. Yet with them remained, and among them were upheld, the true life and hope of the Church of Scotland. By them work was done through districts and parishes, greatly underestimated as to its amount and value by those who demand that the kingdom of God shall always come with observation.

The history of Moderatism, what it began with and what it ended in, the pretensions of its rise, and the undisguised baseness of its latter end, is a great historical commentary on the

results, in Christian Churches, of setting the secondary interests in the primary place. It is, in one word, ruin. Let us face, let us understand, let us appropriate, let us sympathise with, let us advance the culture of the time, so far as we have power to do it. That is a great Christian duty belonging to the right fulfilment of the task of the Church, and it is fitted to prepare us, not only to do the Lord's work, but to learn for ourselves the Lord's providential lessons. But as Christians, as Churches, let us never forget that first—unconditionally, always first—we have truth to speak, whether men will hear or forbear, and we have a type of life to fulfil, and be, whether men will approve or condemn.

Looking from this point of view, it is very easy indeed to understand the Dean's sympathy with Moderatism. For he also dreads this one thing, a religion that mars the harmony of life by refusing to adapt itself to the spirit of the age, and to ally itself with the widest variety of opinions and of tendencies. I do not allege that the Dean desires to obliterate from any mind those affirmations which constitute the Confession of Christ's Church, and of the Protestant Churches in particular. But then he is most anxious that, in whatever forms embodied, religious faith should own fellowship with the widest variety of human beliefs and of human impressions. It is for religion itself he fears, if it should commit itself to assert broadly the unconditional necessity of faith, and the peculiarity of grace, and of its fruits and working in this world. "Surely," he seems to say, "the current will prove too strong, the effort to hold the ground will prove abortive, condemned by the result. Be wise in time!" Therefore everything, in every sphere of life, which can in any sense have ascribed to it moral worth, must be viewed as, *pro tanto*, true Christian religion. So, on the other side, Christian religion has its character best and most wisely fixed when it is mainly identified—not absolutely, but mainly—with those forms of

social excellence and attainment which are independent of all doctrines, and are developed in a thousand different schools. Well, I say that in such a scheme the great Christian beliefs concerning incarnation, sin, and grace, even if they continue to be held, change their character. They cease and must cease to be what they were. Insignificant for the Church, they can no longer maintain their claim to be momentous for the individual. They subside into mere variable forms, equivalent and exchangeable—one statement nearly as good as another; and religion becomes in effect only "a form of culture, suffusing life with colours of solemn and tender sentiment."

I cannot but regard it as confirmation of what I impute—not of all the inferences which I draw for myself—when I find Dean Stanley preaching the other day on the mystery of the Trinity, and explaining the "three names" to the effect that the Father is God in creation, the Son is God in history, the Spirit is God in conscience; and that we have fellowship with the Father in nature, with the Son not only in Christ (who of course is reverently named), but also in all elevating passages of human character and history, with the Spirit in conscience. Still more do I regard it as confirmation when I find him commending to Scottish Christians, in lecturing on the Scottish Churches, the truly Christian character of David Hume. No one was asking him to pass judgment on Hume; no one would hinder him from acknowledging Hume's uprightness and amiability; but it is strange indeed to find Hume commended in such circumstances as a truly Christian character. This is no mere excess of charity towards an individual—if it were I should pass it. Nay, it is a recommendation of a mode of judging to be applied to principles and to facts. As such it is to be met distinctly. And not concerning myself here with what David Hume was or was not, what he found or failed to find, I say that without the faith of Christ there is no true Christian character. I will add, in the lan-

guage of the 18th Article of the Church of England—"They are to be holden accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved."

Quite the same impression is conveyed by some of the notices interwoven into the sketch of distinguished Scotchmen in the Dean's last lecture. Some of these are most beautiful; but I am in the judgment of those who heard or read, whether the idea is not conveyed that where genius touches upon life, especially if it recognises God and duty at all, there we are to own a teacher of the Christian religion.

I think it right and incumbent to speak of one of these cases. I mean his reference to one for whose memory we all cherish very deep and peculiar feelings—Robert Burns.

But before I advert to anything the Dean said, I will ask—Can no one stop the din that profanes the grave of Robert Burns? Has no one the heart to hear the "inhabitant below," or to understand his voice? Of all perverse destinies with which earth could perplex his fame, did it ever visit his imagination that crowds of rhetorical men would go about in never-ending floods of eloquence to prove his life a great moral victory and triumph? Did he ever foresee that every after-dinner orator, who wished to show what a flexible thing advanced Christianity can be, would harp upon the passages that saddened his own thoughtful hours, as proofs of what may comport with high moral and Christian excellency? Shame upon them that are so destitute of love for Burns, that have so little sympathy with the pathos of his own view of his own life, as not to understand they are to let that alone! Why can they not let it alone? Let them celebrate his genius, if it needs to be celebrated; let them celebrate his honest manhood—a great deal too straightforward, I will be bold to say,

to tolerate the despicable sophistry that is spent on his career —let them dwell on the undying glow he has shed into Scottish minds, and hearts, and homes, and lives, and history, and for the rest let it alone. Nobody is going to meddle with it, if themselves will let it alone. But if they will not, on themselves be the shame.

> "A curse upon the clown and knave
> Who will not let his ashes rest."

This by the way. Now as to Dean Stanley. We object to Robert Burns as a religious teacher, because he does not take his ground as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and as one who desired to follow Him. We are not judging whether, at any time of his life, he became such. Neither are we standing on any question of more or less orthodoxy. Neither are we questioning the beauty of the admiring tribute which he paid to Christian doctrine in "The Cottar's Saturday Night." Neither are we blind to the force and pathos of the "Advice to a Young Man," admirable as far as it goes. But, I repeat, he does not take his ground and speak his rede as a believer in the Lord Jesus, and as one who desired to follow Him; as I suppose, because he was not prepared to take that responsibility, and was too honest a man to go farther in that matter than his actual convictions warranted. This does not require us to deprive ourselves of the benefit of anything good or true that is in Robert Burns. But it is one reason for refusing to recognise him as a wise religious teacher. Further, we see that when Robert Burns broke with the ancient habit or tradition of Scottish piety, whether that was his own fault or the fault of the Church, or of both, that breach brought with it a deplorable consequence. He continued from time to time to pour out exquisite strains of occasional devotion. But while he scourged that which he saw around him, savouring as he judged of hypocrisy and religious hollowness, where is the indication of his finding out or working out a conception of

faith in Christ or love to Christ, distinct from that which he condemned and denounced? The blame for that we lay in the most precise and stringent manner on Scottish Moderate ministers. They did their best to ruin Burns, and we abhor them for it—wretched men, that called themselves ministers of Christ, and had not the heart to preach Him.*

Upon the principles he has stated, the Dean appears as the advocate of Established Churches. In Establishments, and in those alone, in his view, can the end be secured. For, first, Establishments in theory are absolutely ruled by the State, which easily can remove every restriction; and, second, Establishments naturally tend, in his judgment, to be conformed to the type which he desiderates. They are to be expressions, then, of the religious sentiment of the community; they are to be brought as far as circumstances admit to the point of having a blank shield, of bearing no device to which any appreciable part of the community objects. They are thus to be the scene in which the alliance of the Christian sentiment with every form of opinion which happens to arise may go uninterruptedly on from age to age. Nonconformist bodies meanwhile, besides securing safety-valves for peculiar and unreasonable people, can be useful for "keeping alive the fire of devotion and love, which in Established Churches is sometimes apt to die out in the light of reason and breadth of inquiry." Performing these humble offices—and most particularly, I suppose, sheltering the fire of devotion from the light of reason—they may remain in their own subordinate place, while the Establishments pursue their career in the regions of illuminism which have been described. Now, observe that there is no difference between the Dean and us with respect to the position that the Church should labour to understand the age, and should be ever ready, not only to teach what the age will receive, but herself to receive the new lessons or new lights which are ascertained to

* See Appendix, B.

men by the progress of God's providence. The difference is, whether the Church is to perform this part of its duty livingly, as a society realising its own calling and responsibility, or whether it is to have all questions settled for it in the way suggested. If he had only said that Churches must not rely on mere traditions, but must be prepared to utter present convictions from a living and actual conscience of truth and duty; if he had said, for instance, that they must hold themselves free, on a fair call, to review all merely human creeds in the light of Scripture, and of all relevant argument as to their structure and uses, he would only have said what we should all approve. But he contemplates a quite different end, and especially a quite different road. He even considers the question to be virtually settled for both the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, and argues in behalf of both on that ground, though, no doubt, he sees points in which the principle is not yet properly applied. Hence, as to the Scottish Establishment, he regards the Confession—on grounds the validity of which I don't judge—as already laid upon the shelf alongside of the Covenant—like that, he says, to be honoured, but like that, not to be honoured in the observance. It has not been reconsidered, nor modified, nor exchanged for a new Confession fitted for the time, but simply it is to be treasured up "among historical documents."

Very well: we all know that a powerful tide is running in influential quarters in favour of a general relaxation of belief, and that is in favour of the Dean's design. Besides that, in another way, the existing forces tend in the same direction. For the more that divisions of opinion multiply, the more temptation there is to men who value an Establishment to widen the base indefinitely, as the natural policy for strengthening the institution. So that we can see how the Dean's view of what Establishments ought to be and are, might receive conclusive and unanswerable verification. I am bound, however, to

record my belief that there are many men in the Established Churches who repudiate all this, and remain where they are because they do not believe the Dean's theory. Meanwhile, he appeals to us outside the Establishment not to be so unreasonable as to propose to pull down Establishments, which satisfy in the way indicated such aspirations as his own. Now, I will make bold to answer this appeal on behalf—to speak first of them—of nine-tenths of those whom the Dean has thus addressed. And I say that, just in so far as the Established Churches correspond to the Dean's ideal, and in so far as that becomes clear, we will most certainly join with all our might to pull them down. More than that, there are plenty of men in the Established Churches who, on that supposition, will overcome the temptation of their position and come to help us. Churches of that kind, if they are to be called Churches, are a moral nuisance not to be tolerated for an hour. I mean Churches in which the whole power, the whole means of attraction which the State can employ, is devoted to support the principle that the Church of Christ, as such, has no principles and no conscience—has no peremptory assertions to make, no distinct truth and no distinct life to represent and embody to the world. It would be treason to Christianity itself to connive at this for an hour.

The Dean came down here, doubtless, to gratify many friends and admirers, as well as to testify the interest which our history has awakened in a mind which has inquired into many histories. In the course of doing so, his own convictions led him to adorn with the attractions of his cultivated mind the cause of Broad Churchism and of Establishments, represented as one cause, and to depreciate, as he can do so well, what we call evangelical religion, and dissent. I have little doubt that his intention was, in compliance with his own honest convictions, to strengthen the cause of the Established Church in our community at the cost of all the others. I will raise no debate here and now as

to whether that is desirable or not. But this I will say, that in my judgment his lectures have done more to set that question agoing than any event that has recently taken place in this community. There are many of us who cherish a very deep feeling that, of things within a man's discretion, one of the last we would like to have a hand in would be a contest with any other Church about money and privileges—a contest which hardly ever can be kept clear of debasing and unworthy associations. As long as we are not called out, we are much disposed to keep quiet. But Dr. Stanley has certainly succeeded in strongly fixing our attention upon some evil influences working with increasing strength. He has vividly set before us existing tendencies; he has let us see that, short of the complete consummation which he approves, there is much in the present position of the Established Churches which tends towards it; he has let us see that there is much which tends to perplex and entangle good men, much that almost forces them to be content with as much fidelity to Church duties—(I am not speaking of merely personal duties)—as circumstances or the incurable difficulties of their position will allow. He has fixed our attention on these things; we are not to exaggerate them, we are not to take any hasty course about them; but we are not going to forget them.

In closing these lectures, let me remember that there are matters of more importance. I have had to speak for the independence of the Church. Dean Stanley is mistaken if he thinks either that we take it up as a mere tradition, or that we wish to use it for the maintenance of any mere tradition. This I have desired to show in the present lecture. We wish to be free to bring the present faith and life of the Church to bear on present duties, present trials, present questions. We think it indeed a wise use of freedom to recognise the constitutional basis, which supports our action and tends to its strength and continuity, in the past history of the way by which God has led us. We think it a wise use of freedom

not to be carried with every wind of doctrine, nor to fall down and worship whatever comes to us in the name of culture and civilization. We think that in the past Christ has been with His Church, and taught her many things out of the Scriptures which we do well to hold fast. We believe, at the same time, that more light will break out of the Word, as the Church pursues her way under the discipline of Providence. We have to deal with the present, not according to past convictions, but according to present convictions; not according to the beliefs of our fathers, but according to our own; we have to convey, in so far as we represent the Church, the message and the influence which Christ's Church ought to convey to the men of our time, who inherit the past and are looking forward to the future. For that we would be free of every bond except the regard we owe to Christ's word, and the regard which He has appointed us to have to one another's convictions in shaping our message and our action. That has never been an easy task at any time. It is not like to be an easy task in our time. Perhaps it is well that it should not be easy.

Can I speak of this, and not add also, that if any will say to us, in any of our Churches, "You are far below such work as this," we have no reply except to listen, and to confess that indeed we are far below it? The more we feel how far below, the better for us and for the work itself. For the worst enemies of the Church's liberties have been ever those who vaunted those liberties, but failed to use them well. Therefore I implore you to remember, if you have agreed with me in any of my statements, as I would be myself reminded, that the independence of the Church means nothing unless it crowns a true and various Christianity that goes before. Let us take heed what it is to mean with us—with us during the few years we are to remain members of the Church on earth. O that liberty might mean in all our Churches intense devotedness and unsparing service! If it shall mean that—if it shall

mean a heart that sets the good cause first, and labours to carry it forward in every land—if it shall mean not zeal to build up our own sect or party, but a love for our people, our own Scottish people, those of them who love us, and those who love us not, an enterprising courage to confront their difficulties, to bear their burdens, to heal their sins—if it enable us to cherish that high temper yet lowly spirit, out of which may arise men of fire to be our missionaries and our ministers and our elders, men prepared to spend their years with small care for earthly ends, and much for the kingdom of our Lord Jesus —if it lead us to devote to this cause the utmost we can reach, of learning and culture and means, yet so that we keep all subordinate to the one great aim, fusing them all into a faithful service of Christ—if we maintain and increase among us the consciousness of what conversion is, and what following Christ is—if, being free, we are humbly candid towards divine teaching and charitable towards the brethren—and if we are taught to deal with all questions, not as servants of the world, and not as servants of the past, but as servants of the truth and of the Lord,—that will vindicate our independence at the bar of history. Nothing else will; nothing else ought. And then how securely might we smile at the poor talk which balances culture against faith! for then how surely and how completely all things should be ours.

APPENDIX A, p. 22.

In the Lecture as originally delivered, reference was made to the circumstance that Mr. Comper's book bore to be published by the desire of Dr. Wordsworth, Bishop of St. Andrews in the Scottish Episcopal Church, to whom it was dedicated. This reference is now withdrawn, as Bishop Wordsworth has explained that he desires his sentiments to be gathered from what he has himself written within the last twelve years, and that he and Mr. Comper are not now to be regarded as wholly agreeing on these matters. Lest it should be thought, however, that Mr. Comper's standing in his Church is not such as to warrant my taking him as representative of any considerable section of it, I may refer to the proceedings which took place in November, 1870, in connection with the opening of the Mission Chapel of St. Margaret, Aberdeen. I do not, of course, make those who attended responsible for all Mr. Comper's views. But no one can read the proceedings without drawing the conclusion that Mr. Comper is by no means an isolated and exceptional person in his Church, but stands in the central stream of its life and work. All I have heard of him leads me to believe him to be a very earnest and laborious man.

In connection with this subject I may add a few sentences. It does not surprise us that persons persuaded in their own minds in favour of Episcopacy should represent it as a duty to be in fellowship with a or the Bishop, and should represent the non-performance of that duty as involving, ordinarily, some degree of sin. For, besides invincible ignorance, there is ignorance which, though real, and in an important sense honest, is culpable. When a Prelatist charges such ignorance, and therefore some sin, on me, or I on him, it need scandalise neither of us. Every Christian, I suppose, remains culpably ignorant of something he ought to know, great or small, in doctrine or duty. For the forgiveness of such sins we pray daily, while we pray also for the more single eye and the humbler heart to which all things will become more clear. But what does surprise us is, that an honest difference of judgment regarding the number and relation of office-

bearers whom Christ appointed to watch over His Church—a difference involving possibly some degree of sin on one side or other—should be conceived to place either party in an exceptional or critical relation to salvation, or to the care of the great Shepherd.

It does not greatly alter the feelings of surprise on our part, though it softens the phraseology on the other side, when it is represented in this way, viz., that those who do not adhere to a bishop may be recognised as members of the one Church in a state of schism, more or less culpable according to circumstances; but that their Churches are not true Churches, have not promised grace in the ordinances they administer, are null, in short. Let it be considered how much importance those who hold this theory attach to true Church ministration; and then let it be considered that, according to them, all this most needful grace has been by Christ our Lord suspended on an empirical arrangement, so doubtful in its evidence that the Scripture proof of it is given up as hopeless by many even of the Episcopalians! We on our side are withheld from erecting any of our "points" into corresponding importance, not by any doubt about their authenticity, but by the view we take of our Lord's way of dealing with men in matters of salvation. We own personal grace wherever persons are inwardly believing to Christ and adhering to Him. We own true Churches wherever societies of professing believers, claiming and exercising a Church state in professed subjection to Christ, are holding forth the main fundamentals of the faith, and doing the main things which He has commanded to be done in and by Churches. We admit that there may be doubtful cases both of persons and Churches. And we hold that different degrees of sin attach to the mistakes, defects, and omissions both of the one and of the other.

So in particular of unity, which is greatly relied on as a characteristic of Christ's Church, and so as necessitating the conclusions at which our High Church friends arrive. We acknowledge that the visible Church ought to be one. We acknowledge that breaches which interrupt fellowship imply sin somewhere. We acknowledge that in proportion as they are recklessly or wantonly made, or maintained under manifestly carnal influences, in the same proportion the guilt of schism is incurred or enhanced. But we refuse to see unity *only* in unity of constitution. We maintain that not all unity, not all *visible* unity, has failed, even when breaches have taken place which imply sin, and are attended with evil. We maintain that the

worst and truly fatal kind of schism may be still far off, even when men, under misapprehensions, withdraw from a scripturally constituted Church. For instance, assuming Presbyterianism alone to be scriptural, we hold that if the inhabitants of one-half of Scotland should withdraw peaceably from it, on the mistaken ground that Scripture required the Church to be episcopally constituted, and should take means to have their Church so constituted and governed, they would be breaking unity on their part, not without some sin in their honest mistake. Yet their sin might have extremely little of the spirit or of the offence of schism; and their peaceable separation might leave, in a large measure, unity still untouched; not merely inward unity, but a very visible and palpable unity—a unity serving, not perfectly indeed, yet powerfully, towards the great ends for which Christ appointed His Church to be one. If, however (still supposing Presbyterianism alone to be scriptural), *we* proceeded, on the ground of their mistake and peaceable withdrawal, to charge them with a fatal breach of unity, to unchurch them, and to deny the validity of the ordinances they had procured to be administered, while they acknowledged the validity of ours, then in that case *we* should be the true schismatics, the real and effective breakers of a unity which the others had only somewhat defaced and obscured. We should be so although, by supposition, scriptural and right in our order. For always in Christ's kingdom the fundamental and vital precedes in importance the external and politic.

All this is somewhat away from the subject of my Lectures, for Dean Stanley, notoriously, has no sympathy with the High Church views which I am characterising. But I think it worth while to say so much for this reason. All men who attach importance to Church duties will be found at times feeling and speaking strongly on what they regard as inexcusable or disgraceful failures, perhaps treacheries, in connection with them. In particular circumstances they will think themselves justified in strongly charging sin, and calling on men to have no fellowship with those sins. Presbyterians have often done so. But it is one thing to charge sin, even in this strong and peremptory manner; it is another thing to deny standing in the visible Church merely because Church duties have not been rightly apprehended or performed. When, in such cases, the language has become very strong and sweeping, it has generally been because it was felt that a dereliction of duty, a moral baseness, could be

charged, which inferred (under any Church constitution) estrangement from prosperous spiritual life until it was repented.

APPENDIX B, p. 87.

The expression in the text may seem strong, but it is deliberately chosen. It applies, of course, only to some individuals, not by any means to a whole party. There are facts, known on perfectly good authority, though they appear in no life of Burns, connected with one or two periods in his history when his mind seemed open to the influence of earnest religious convictions, which would justify much harsher epithets. If all that could be charged against the Moderate ministers concerned, were merely that they sought to determine him in favour of some opinions divergent from my own, I should use no epithets. But what is to be charged against them is sheer treason to their trust as ministers of Christ.

My assertion in p. 86, line 9 and following, has been questioned on the ground of statements contained in Burns' letters. In the face of those statements (and remembering some others) I abide by the assertion in the text.

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POSTSCRIPT.

Since the last edition of my Lectures appeared, Dean Stanley has published his. The text bears the marks of a good deal of minute adjustment, intended, apparently, to fortify the Lectures against the criticisms which have proceeded from various quarters. Some of the points to which I have adverted have become less salient, or are stated more cautiously, in the Dean's printed version of them. The angles, generally, have been somewhat rounded off. In substance, however, the points I touched on are still maintained by the Dean. I have, therefore, not felt called upon to make alterations upon any of my own statements in the present edition, but have left them as they were. In one instance only, I have gathered from the Dean's volume, that a statement in his Lectures, erroneously reported in the newspapers, had led me into remarks which were irrelevant. I have therefore deleted the passage. It stood near the beginning of my Third Lecture, and referred to the negative character of the Confession. The Dean's remarks, as it appears, were not meant to apply to our Confession, commonly so called, but to the National Covenant, sometimes called the "Negative Confession," because it contains a detailed protest against a series of Romish errors. I will not waste time in debating the merits of "negatives," which simply represented the attitude of the Scottish Church and State as on their defence against Romanism. All that I could say on the subject has been anticipated by Mr. Taylor Innes, in an article in the March number of the *Contemporary Review*.

I do not think it necessary to burden these Lectures with a fresh specification of all the points in which I think the Dean has been misled as regards the view to be taken of particular facts or features of our history. I may say, however, that I have been struck, even more than before, with the method of implied argument, by which he leads up to his panegyric on Moderatism. He finds in many eminent men *moderation*, that is, the disposition to a considerate and large-minded estimate of things, and a calm and kindly temper. Such cases are treated as the prophecies and precursors of Moderatism, and the men who manifested this disposition are ranked as the spiritual progenitors of the Moderates. Now, every truly eminent man has in him (in a greater degree or a less) a notable power of appreciating persons from whom he differs, and doing justice to tendencies with

which he does not wholly comply, or which he feels it his duty to oppose. The noisy personages who are incapable of doing so are the mere lumber of all Churches and parties; and they were certainly as numerous in the (so-called) Moderate ranks as anywhere else. But the whole value of the true moderation which good and great men have shown, depends on its being the attendant of strong positive convictions, and pronounced active tendencies. When it tempers these leading qualities, moderation is an excellent thing. On the contrary, when it begins to be worshipped for its own sake, and is allowed to lead the thinking and the life, it is the sure token of poverty; and it intensifies the poverty from which it springs. So it was with the Moderates; and therefore they presently became bitter and fanatical in their moderation.

The only passage in Dr. Stanley's published Lectures in which (though without naming me) he adverts explicitly to a statement of mine, is in page 140. Here he sets against my account of the Moderates the testimony, as he says, of "the venerable biographer of the leader of the popular party of that age," viz., Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood, in his Life of Erskine; "the cordial and generous tribute of one whose very name is a guarantee for strictness of life and faith." He cites as follows:—"The names of such men as Cuming and Wishart, and Walker and Dick, and Robertson and Blair, are embalmed, with the name of Erskine, in the hearts of all who have learned in any measure how to value whatever has been most respectable in our Zion. God grant that while their memory is yet fresh in the mind, the men who fill their places in the world may catch a portion of their spirit! God grant that while they, like Elijah of old, may be dropping their mantle on the earth, their spirit also, like that of the prophet, may yet remain to bless the children of men."

Here is enough, one would think, to extinguish Dr. Rainy! After all, however, it is only the Dean's concluding misfortune. *These are not the words of Sir Henry Moncreiff at all.* They are part of a sermon, *by Dr. Inglis*—that is to say, by a very decided *Moderate.* See passage as cited from Life of Erskine, p. 481, and compare p. 396.

I may add, however, that I should be sorry to dispute the claim of many Moderates to figure, in Dr. Inglis' language, among "the respectabilities of Zion."

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